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Gustav Mahler's Symphonies (Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien) by Paul Bekker (1921): A Translation with Commentary

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GUSTAV MAHLER'S SYMPHONIES (GUSTAV MAHLERS SINFONIEN)

BY PAUL BEKKER (1921): A TRANSLATION WITH COMMENTARY

by

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B.Mus., B.A., Utah State University, 1998

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A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment
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This dissertation entitled:
Gustav Mahler's Symphonies (Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien) by Paul Bekker (1921): A Translation
with Commentary
written by Kelly Dean Hansen
has been approved for the Department of Musicology

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The final copy of this dissertation has been examined by the signatories, and we
find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards
of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

ABSTRACT

Hansen, Kelly Dean (Ph.D., Musicology)

Gustav Mahler's Symphonies (Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien) by Paul Bekker (1921): A Translation with Commentary

Dissertation directed by Associate Professor Steven M. Bruns

Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien by Paul Bekker was published in 1921, just ten years after the composer's death. Bekker presents critical readings of all nine completed symphonies and *Das Lied von der Erde*. His "Symphonic Style" chapter sets the stage by considering Mahler's place in the 19th-century symphonic tradition, which he traces from Beethoven through Schubert and Bruckner. A main concern in Bekker's introductory chapter and throughout the book is the "finale problem" that had challenged composers ever since Beethoven's Ninth. He also calls attention to the "dangerous power" of the Adagio as manifested in Bruckner's symphonies. Bekker argues that Mahler had solved these and other problems of the "modern" symphony, and he revisits questions of form along with other critical concerns throughout the book.

The following ten analytical chapters fall into two main parts. The first part considers topics such as the problematic status of the "program" in Mahler, the changing influence of Mahler's songs on his symphonies, the fundamental importance of the melodic impulse in Mahler, and aspects of formal design, orchestration, and counterpoint. Bekker's introductory reflections are often surprising and original. The second part of each analytical chapter is a more traditional hermeneutic narrative that discusses the symphony movement by movement, with copious notated musical excerpts by way of illustration. The present translation presents new

digital versions of Bekker's 888 examples, noting errors in the original edition and adding for each example measure numbers and details about instrumentation.

In addition to presenting the first complete English translation of Bekker's landmark study, the dissertation introduces the historical and critical context for his work. Bekker's contemporaries Ernst Kurth and August Halm are considered, among others. Unlike many twentieth-century writers on Mahler, Bekker remains closely focused on musical analysis, with only incidental reference to biographical and documentary details. The translator's extensive commentary highlights special problems in interpreting Bekker's German and also traces Bekker's significant influence upon later Mahler scholarship. Theodor W. Adorno's debt to Bekker is of particular interest, and one is surprised to discover that Adorno does not consistently acknowledge Bekker's precedence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the long road leading to the miracle of completing this translation and commentary, there have been several individuals—miracle-workers, as it were—whose tireless efforts and patience have been instrumental in helping the waters to part and the five loaves to feed the five thousand. Any written recognition will necessarily fall short of conveying all that these people have done, but my gratitude to all of them is boundless.

In his 1912 memorial address, Arnold Schoenberg began by announcing that “Gustav Mahler was a saint.” If this is true, then Paul Bekker was one of Mahler’s earliest acolytes, and it has been my honor to make his words available to a larger audience. Throughout the process, I have been watched over by my own “saint,” Dr. Steven M. Bruns. If working a miracle is a qualification for sainthood, then this project is his. It begins and ends with his vision, and it is my hope that the final product will be a worthy reward for his years of patience and faith, which went far above and beyond what should be expected of any dissertation advisor.

I also thank the other members of my examination committee. There is no way to overestimate the contribution of Dr. Oliver Ellsworth. He meticulously considered every word of the translation in its first draft, finding errors and suggesting alternatives, and even discovering sentences or phrases that I had skipped. As an emeritus professor, his willingness to take on such a tremendous task—which spread over the course of more than a year—is worthy of my deepest appreciation. Dr. Carlo Caballero is not only a distinguished scholar, but also a true friend. In his own work and in the work he endorses, he never accepts anything less than excellence. I have always been able to count on him to challenge me to dig deeper and to go an extra mile that I would have otherwise skipped. My admiration for Dr. David Korevaar, whose

life should serve as a model for any actively performing musician and scholar, knows no limit. His participation on my committee means more than he realizes. I am grateful to Dr. Helmut Müller-Sievers, Director of the Center for the Humanities and the Arts and Professor of German, for his willingness to come aboard at a relatively late date. Despite his very full schedule, he provided the invaluable scholarly perspective of someone from outside of musicology.

The work of my example transcribers, Kathryn Mueller (Symphonies 4, 6, 8, 9, and *Das Lied von der Erde*) Tyler Harrison (Symphonies 1 and 2), and Matthew S. Wilson (Symphonies 3, 5, and 7), has been nothing short of heroic. Their patience through seemingly endless rounds of proofreading and correction has been a humbling experience. Bekker's book contains 888 notated examples that are integral to his text. These three transcribers, all graduate students in composition and theory, have created beautiful new versions of Bekker's original examples, thereby enhancing the text in a magnificent way. Each of their styles has its own "character," but the result is uniformly splendid and as accurate as humanly possible.

I would like to express appreciation for several members of the community of Mahler scholars, particularly Dr. Stephen E. Hefling and Dr. James L. Zychowicz, who verified at the outset that a complete, scholarly translation of Bekker had not yet been accomplished, and retained interest throughout the process. The vision and work of Professor Donald Mitchell has been particularly inspiring. His pioneering work formed a foundation for my commentary and notes, and he advocated for a translation of Bekker many years ago. It is my hope that there will be some way for him to experience the fulfillment of this wish. Finally, there was no greater honor than to receive acknowledgment from Mahler's distinguished biographer, Henry-Louis de La Grange, who found out about my project, read the drafts of several chapters, and contacted

me without solicitation. He confirmed that, even with his encyclopedic knowledge of virtually every source pertaining to Mahler, my translation of Bekker's book will bring him something new.

There are many others who have helped facilitate the actual work. I offer my warmest thanks to Scott and Mary Lou Moore, owners of the Jesters Dinner Theatre and School for the Performing Arts in Longmont, Colorado. In the last year of translating, their support and encouragement of the talents of my older two children, Cosette and Tyler, has substituted for some of the parental attention that I have been unable to give them of late. In addition, the rehearsals for several productions in which my children performed offered me a valuable and surprisingly conducive time to work on the translation. About a third of the translated text was produced at the tables of Jesters during these rehearsals.

My family has been a foundational rock throughout the years. My children, Cosette, Tyler, and Oliver, have grown up knowing nothing other than a dad who was trying to finish a doctorate. In those years, they have managed to live full and rich lives in circumstances that would be trying for the most exceptional young person. My parents, Dean and Relle Hansen, have never hesitated to support me when I needed it most. In many situations, I don't know what I would have done had I not been able to reach out to them.

Finally, I dedicate the dissertation to my beloved wife Bonnie, who has been supportive from the very beginning and has endured trials far beyond what any graduate student spouse should have to face. The fact that she remains with me at the end is the greatest miracle of all.

KELLY DEAN HANSEN
Boulder, Colorado, May 2012

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INTRODUCTION

Even as recently as 1999, the British Mahler authority Donald Mitchell wondered why no one had yet translated into English one of the most important German monographs on Mahler, Paul Bekker's "magisterial" 1921 study of the symphonies.¹ After all, two other major studies had been translated years before. The influence of Theodor W. Adorno's seminal and notoriously challenging book *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomik*, published in German in 1971 but containing material first written in 1960, was especially noticeable after Edmund Jephcott's 1992 English translation.² Constantin Floros's *The Symphonies*, the last of his three volumes on Mahler from 1985, is a more accessible source with useful outlines of the formal designs of Mahler's symphonic movements. It appeared in English, in a translation by Vernon Wicker, in 1993.³ The appearance of these works in translation makes the absence of an English version of Bekker's book all the more noticeable. In 2012, Bekker is still being cited but remains untranslated. Even if one reads German very well, one may still not absorb as much of the full scope and details of a study as huge as Bekker's as one would when reading it in his or her native language.

The importance of Bekker's work for German-speaking Mahler experts, including Adorno and Floros, can be detected in countless ways. One of the concepts most generally, albeit incorrectly, attributed to Adorno is that of the *Durchbruch*, or "breakthrough," a term used to describe a moment in a work of Mahler where pent-up energies that have been repeatedly

1 Donald Mitchell, "Eternity or Nothingness? Mahler's Fifth Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 236-325 at 304.

2 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

3 Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993).

dammed up and turned back are released with the greatest force. Adorno most famously used this term to refer to the analogous climaxes of the first and last movements in the First Symphony.⁴ The term actually originated with Bekker, who used it to describe precisely these two moments in the First, although it would be further developed by Adorno.

Bekker is, of course, also used as a source for English-speaking writers, but, as Mitchell makes clear, an English translation is long overdue. In addition to the historical significance of the book itself, Bekker's own status as one of the most influential and important music critics of the early 20th century demands it. His book on Beethoven has been available in English since 1927.⁵ Readers can quickly gain a sense of Bekker's prolific writings and influence by surveying the vast collection of his documents and letters, housed at the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library of Yale University.⁶ He is considered the originator of the concept of "New Music" to describe trends in the 20th century.⁷ In addition to Mahler, he was also a champion of Franz Schreker, Ernst Křenek, and Arnold Schoenberg. Bekker's effectiveness as a critic was sharpened by his extensive theoretical, historical, and practical knowledge. He championed a hermeneutic approach to both criticism and analysis that is exemplified in his Beethoven volume.

4 See James Buhler's important article on this subject, "'Breakthrough' as Critique of Form: The Finale of Mahler's First Symphony," *19th Century Music* 20/2 (1996), pp. 125-43. The article discusses the concept at some length with respect to the Finale of the First. Bekker is cited at the beginning of the article.

5 Paul Bekker, *Beethoven* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1911). English translation by Mildred Mary Bozman (London: J. M. Dent, 1927). Bekker's important survey of the 19th-century symphony, *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1918), is unavailable in English translation.

6 The catalog can be browsed at <http://drs.library.yale.edu>. See also Christopher Hailey, "The Paul Bekker Collection in the Yale University Music Library" in *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 51/1 (1994), pp. 13-21. This article also contains extensive biographical information.

7 Most significantly in the essay "Neue Musik" from 1919, published in Bekker, *Dritter Band der gesammelten Schriften* (Stuttgart and Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1923), pp. 85-118. The concept would later form the basis of major works by Anton Webern and Adorno (Anton Webern, *Der Weg zur neuen Musik*, edited by Willi Reich [Vienna: Universal Edition, 1960, based on a collection of private lectures given in 1933], English translation by Leo Black as *The Path to the New Music* [Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Co., 1963], and Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* [Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1949], English translations by Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster as *Philosophy of Modern Music* [London: Sheed and Ward, 1973] and Robert Hullot-Kentor as *Philosophy of New Music* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006]).

Later, he would also articulate important currents in aesthetic philosophy and music sociology that demonstrated considerable influence on Adorno and his followers.

Max Paul Eugen Bekker was born September 11, 1882 in Berlin. He worked as a freelance violinist in Berlin and later as a conductor in Aschaffenburg (1902-3) and Görlitz (1903-4). His first position as a music critic was with the *Berliner neueste Nachrichten* in 1906. He moved to the *Berliner allgemeine Zeitung* in 1909 and then in 1911 to the prestigious *Frankfurter Zeitung*, where he became chief music critic until 1923. In 1925, he was appointed General Director (Intendant) at the opera house in Kassel, moving to a similar position in Wiesbaden in 1927. Because his father was Jewish, he was dismissed in 1933. He left Germany at that time and settled in Paris, where he wrote for the *Pariser Tageblatt*. In 1934, he emigrated to New York, becoming chief music critic for the German-language *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*. His first book in English, *The Story of the Orchestra*, was completed shortly before his death in New York at age 54 on March 7, 1937.⁸

Bekker had a lively interaction with other musical intellectuals of his time. His hermeneutic approach was famously attacked by Hans Pfitzner for ascribing too much importance to poetic ideas in his interpretation of music by Beethoven and others.⁹ Other structuralists and formalists, such as Heinrich Schenker, would similarly criticize Bekker.

8 These biographical details are taken from Christopher Hailey, "Bekker, (Max) Paul (Eugen)," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), iii: 153-54 and Martin Geck, "Bekker, Max Paul Eugen," *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2. Aus., heraus. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2000), Personenteil 2:968-70.

9 Hans Pfitzner, *Die neue Ästhetik der musikalischen Impotenz* (Munich: Verlag der Süddeutschen Monatshefte, 1920). The pamphlet, whose title translated into English is *The New Aesthetic of Musical Impotence*, is a tirade against Bekker and his championship of Schreker and other progressive composers. Pfitzner also attacked the hermeneutic approach in Bekker's Beethoven book. Bekker responded to Pfitzner in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* with an article entitled "Impotenz – oder Potenz" (January 15-16, 1920). For an article that relates interesting connections between Pfitzner and Mahler, along with Alma Mahler, Bruno Walter, Guido Adler, and Anton Webern, see John Williamson, "Mahler and Pfitzner: A Parallel Development," in *On Mahler and Britten: Essays in Honour of Donald Mitchell on His Seventieth Birthday*, edited by Philip Reed (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), pp. 119-31. After overcoming his ambivalence about the opera, Mahler conducted Pfitzner's *Die Rose von Liebesgarten* at Vienna in 1905.

Because of *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien*, Bekker is often grouped with two other significant critics and theorists, August Halm and Ernst Kurth, both of whom were early champions of Anton Bruckner and wrote books about the composer. Halm and Kurth were close friends and colleagues of one another, but Bekker's intellectual relationship with each was quite different. Halm, while progressive, remained a formalist and was opposed to hermeneutics. He heavily criticized Bekker's approach to Beethoven in works such as the *Tempest* Sonata.¹⁰ Bekker, in turn, responded that Halm's language was hardly less metaphorical than his own, and chastised Halm for being overly dogmatic. Nonetheless, Bekker seemed to appreciate the value in Halm's work. He cites the Bruckner monograph at the beginning of the chapter on the Mahler's Seventh Symphony, not in a polemical or critical way, but primarily to indicate that Mahler's works cannot be approached in the manner that Halm applies to Bruckner (which treats each Bruckner symphony as a varied approach to an ideal model, "The" Bruckner symphony).

Bekker and Kurth had a warm intellectual regard for each other. Bekker greatly admired the Swiss theorist's writings. He published an enthusiastic review of Kurth's *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts* in which he called it "one of the most significant achievements in the field of musicological research" and especially commended Kurth's discussion of polyphonic melody, whose "wealth and insight and newness of approach" had "no equivalent in the Bach literature."¹¹ The two men also corresponded. "I do not doubt that a mind of your sharpness and fanatical search for the truth will achieve a total breakthrough," Kurth once wrote of Bekker's

10 See Laura Lynn Kelly, "August Halm's 'Von zwei Kulturen der Musik': A Translation and Introductory Essay" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2008) and Alexander Rehding, "August Halm's Two Cultures as Nature" in *Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Susannah Clark and Alexander Rehding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 142-60, especially from p. 153. *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik* was first published in 1913, and Bekker was one of the book's primary targets.

11 See Ernst Kurth, *Selected Writings*, edited and translated by Lee A. Rothfarb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 3 (and p. 3, n. 6).

relatively low regard for Bruckner.¹² A portion of Kurth's two-volume book on Bruckner has been translated by Lee A. Rothfarb.

The association of Bekker with these two Bruckner scholars, and the important role played by Bruckner and Mahler in early 20th-century German music criticism in general, speaks to the pivotal role of Bekker's masterpiece and provides yet another argument for its translation.¹³ Here, for the first time, the full text of *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien* is made available for an English-speaking audience. There may be several reasons why it has not been attempted until now. The scope of the book is immense. Each symphony is treated in about 30 pages of densely typeset prose, and there is also a long introductory chapter called "The Symphonic Style" ("Der sinfonische Stil"). Bekker's analyses are written with musical examples integrated into the text as a part of the narrative flow, a practice that would be considered unusual today. Between 76 and 104 of these examples appear in each of the ten chapters devoted to the symphonies, an astounding total of 888 individual examples. This, along with the distinctive manner in which they are embedded within the printed prose, is bound to make a potential publisher wary. Perhaps because of the integration of examples into the narrative, Bekker sometimes uses sentence fragments, which pose occasional challenges for the translator. He also uses Mahler's German-language score directions as elements of larger sentences, and it is not always simple to render such unusual syntax in idiomatic English.

12 Karen Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 155. This book is largely concerned with Bruckner and Mahler reception in the first half of the 20th century. Bekker, Halm, and Kurth are extensively cited and discussed throughout.

13 The pairing of Bruckner and Mahler is no longer as routine as it once was. It was of great importance for early Mahler reception. One of the first journals in English to be devoted to both composers was *Chord and Discord* (a "Journal of Modern Musical Progress"), the journal of the Bruckner Society of America. It was launched in 1932, with issues published at irregular intervals until 1969, with one additional issue appearing in 1998. Most issues contained articles on Mahler as well as Bruckner. Dika Newlin, a former student of Arnold Schoenberg, published her Ph.D. dissertation from Columbia University in 1947 as *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg* (Morningside Heights, NY: Kings Crown Press; revised edition published 1978 by W. W. Norton & Co., New York). The book traces the Bruckner-Mahler pairing onward to Schoenberg and the "new music."

Despite the significant difficulties facing any translator of Bekker's book, there is no question that his study is significant, even foundational for many later trends in Mahler research. In my extensive critical notes and commentary at the end of each chapter, I aim to trace at least some of the intellectual paths that lead from Bekker to later writers. Bekker's work not only sheds new light on the work of later Mahler critics such as Adorno and Floros, but also numerous others, Mitchell among them. It also reveals a type of descriptive analysis not commonly seen in later studies and even unusual in its own day. As indicated above, Bekker relies heavily on notated examples, but the primary purpose of these is to supplement and illustrate the prose descriptions and to act as memory aids. There are no formal diagrams, no structural graphs, no measure numbers or even rehearsal numbers. Bekker takes a narrative approach in discussing the music from the first bars to the last. Structural analysis in the manner of Heinrich Schenker (toward whom Bekker was hostile, a sentiment reciprocated by Schenker) plays almost no role. For Bekker, the themes and their roles are of paramount importance. The character of the Mahlerian theme is in fact the final, clinching topic of his opening chapter.

In his foreword, Bekker claims that his is the first work to examine all the symphonies in detail and to present them as a totality. Studies that preceded his are listed in his brief bibliography, for example the individual analyses by Richard Specht, Otto Ernst Nodnagel, and J. V. v. Wöss. A collaborative volume published as *Meisterführer*, No. 10, published before Mahler's death, includes brief discussions of the first eight symphonies. But Bekker's claim is correct: he was the first to present a study of all the symphonies (including *Das Lied von der Erde*) in a single, unified volume. While each Mahler symphony is a kind of "world" unto itself, there are also connections across works that emerge more clearly when Mahler's oeuvre is considered as a whole. The links between songs and symphonies are mentioned by Bekker, and

many later writers would follow his example. But he also considers such things as the special connotations of key choice—such as A minor, D major, or E major—that one can trace across numerous symphonies. It seems plausible that the unusual architecture of Adorno’s Mahler book results from his having noticed the sorts of intertextual connections that Bekker indicates across the composer’s symphonies. Adorno does not consider each symphony in turn in separate chapters, as Bekker does. Rather, he uses broad topics, such as “Tone,” “Characters,” “Novel,” and “Decay and Affirmation.” Within each of these topical chapters, Adorno’s comments range freely across all of the works. His position, in effect, is that one cannot begin to access meaning in an individual Mahler work or passage thereof without knowing the composer’s entire life’s work.¹⁴

While Bekker did have personal access to Alma Mahler, several primary sources that Mahler experts take for granted today were only available to him in an incomplete or corrupted form. The first volume of letters, published by Alma, was released shortly after Bekker’s book, as were the invaluable *Memories (Erinnerungen)* of Natalie Bauer-Lechner under her own name. Excerpts from the latter had been published anonymously in 1912 in a special Mahler issue of the journal *Der Merker*. Even so, Bekker’s efforts to construct a narrative based on incomplete sources are often impressive. Most notably, he constructs a plausible plan for the drafting of the Third Symphony that is based on letters whose dates had been incorrectly published. Bekker himself is the first source of two early program sketches for the Third Symphony (which were published in a slightly different form by Alma), the originals of which have disappeared, and a similar sketch for the Fourth Symphony, which has survived.

¹⁴ I acknowledge Steven Bruns for suggesting that Adorno’s essentially intertextual approach to Mahler may be traced to Bekker, as explained here.

The “Symphonic Style” Chapter

The opening chapter of the book, “The Symphonic Style,” with its carefully planned rhetorical structure, announces Bekker’s deep familiarity with the symphonic tradition. His book therefore not only considers Mahler’s symphonic output as a totality, he also considers Mahler’s place from a well-informed historical understanding of the genre. Bekker begins with a survey of the symphonic tradition as it evolved from Beethoven to Mahler, only briefly touching on the earlier tradition of Haydn and Mozart. His division of post-Beethoven symphonists falls into three groups: German “bourgeois” romantics, program symphonists, and finally, the “Austrian” symphonists, who synthesized the best aspects of both former groups.¹⁵ The scheme is provocative and well argued. Bekker then discusses the “symphonic problems” raised by Beethoven. These include the order of the inner movements, the weight of the slow movement, the structure of the first movement and specifically its introduction, and finally, the character of the finale, which Bekker argues is the one problem that Beethoven did not definitively solve. The “Austrian” symphonists, Schubert, Bruckner, and finally Mahler, approached the “finale problem” from different angles. Schubert’s great B-minor and C-major symphonies are discussed at length, the former as evidence of how the “finale problem” had been recognized and abandoned, and the latter as evidence of how it had been deftly avoided despite the presence of a finale.

Bekker argues that Beethoven and his determinative logic were not the motivation for the Austrian symphonists. He discusses Bruckner at great length, focusing on his “historical mission” to shift the weight of the symphony from the first movement to the Adagio or the

¹⁵ Bekker’s unusual choice of the term “bourgeois” (‘bürgerlich’) to describe the German romantics implies that they were “civic” professional musicians as opposed to the Beethovenian model of the “Artist as Hero” in the sense of Nietzsche, or as opposed to the “Austrian” composers, who are seen as close to the earth and to the “people” (‘Volk’), and whose work transcends social class.

Finale. He presents the argument that, while Bruckner's Adagio and scherzo movements are of an unprecedented grandeur and scope, his finale movements, while extremely ambitious, are often noble failures. Bekker proposes that Bruckner attempted to solve the "finale problem," but was unable to do so. Bekker's instincts seem to have been validated by later musicians and audiences. While Bruckner certainly remains in the repertoire, the worldwide "renaissance" of Mahler's music since the 1960s has greatly overshadowed his predecessor.

This sets the stage for Gustav Mahler. A critical awareness of Bruckner's work is essential for Mahler, who finally solves the "finale problem." Bekker introduces the concept of the "Finale Symphony" and argues that all of Mahler's symphonies are one of three types of "Finale Symphony." This is the most far-reaching and important thesis in the chapter, and is connected to a perceived freedom in the number, type, and order of movements used by Mahler. The three types are: 1) the "direct, forward-moving ascent to the final goal" (Symphonies 1, 6, and 8); 2) the "arrangement of movements that orbit the nucleus of the Finale" (Symphonies 2, 3, 5, and 7); and finally, the most unusual, the Finale as a resolution or epilogue (Symphonies 4 and 9).

Bekker identifies four groups, or cycles, of symphonies, the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies (Nos. 2, 3, and 4 with No. 1 as a "Prelude"), the instrumental symphonies (Nos. 5, 6, and 7), the Eighth, which stands alone as a culmination of the two preceding cycles, and finally, the "Farewell" works, *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth. Bekker closely associates each "cycle" with the texts of the songs that surround them. He then makes another provocative statement: "It is curious: Mahler's symphonic art, determined in its organic manifestation by the broadly and powerfully constructive monumental drive, finds its emotional sources in the smallest musical manifestations of form, in the song" (p. 66). The songs, then, provide an entry point into each

group, or cycle of symphonic works, including one work, *Das Lied von der Erde*, that both serves this function of the earlier song groups—that of introducing a new type of symphonic aesthetic—and itself becomes the first symphonic example of that aesthetic. Bekker’s argument here is not always persuasively supported, particularly in the case of the Rückert songs and the instrumental symphonies. The direct link between the *Wunderhorn* songs and a movement such as the first of the Third Symphony is also questionable.

The types and styles of Mahler’s symphonic movements are presented in summary, preparing us for the detailed discussions of each in the chapters to follow. Bekker enumerates various formal types, including sonata-form outlines without the original purposeful drive of the sonata; scherzo-type movements (largely derived from the Ländler and the waltz); his careful use of the Adagio, knowing its “dangerous power” from Bruckner; and finally, his use of the human voice in the context of the symphony, placed in the context of the state of the genre after Beethoven.

Bekker concludes the chapter with relatively brief discussions of Mahler’s orchestrations, his precise performance indications, his harmony and polyphony, his melodic, harmonic and instrumental sound symbols, his choice of keys for movements and entire works, and finally, the structure of his themes, which, according to Bekker, are “the actual agents of motion for the symphonic organism.” Bekker frequently emphasizes the structural functions of Mahler’s themes, and he develops this idea in intriguing ways.

Bekker’s comments on some of these topics may seem cursory in comparison to their treatment by later scholars. Nonetheless, he does offer many fascinating insights. His comments on Mahler’s orchestration, for example, particularly ideas such as the subordination of individual instrumental colors to the total, cosmic unity of the sound were provocative enough to be quoted

and elaborated by Adorno (see pp. 73-74 and p. 88, note 38). In the chapters on the individual symphonies, Bekker will come back to Mahler's instrumentation, noting, for example, the shift toward a string-dominated sensibility in the Fourth or the problem of the abundant use of "heavy brass" in the Fifth. In the chapters on *Das Lied von der Erde* and especially on the Ninth Symphony, Bekker argues that the perception of the instrumental sound is totally constrained beneath the perception of the idea, that Mahler's abstract musical ideas cannot always be realized adequately in the actual instrumentation. This includes the hammer blows in the Sixth Symphony (see the "Anmerkungen," p. 832). Bekker thus prefigures critical attitudes toward the music of Schoenberg and his school, where the "idea" of the composition is as important as or more important than the actual sounds one hears when the music is played.

Regarding counterpoint, Bekker presents the idea that Mahler's polyphony is constructed in a way that is meant to emphasize the principal melodic line, not the effect of the lines coming together in a harmonic or artful way. He will also elaborate on these ideas later on, particularly when, in the chapter on the Eighth Symphony, he states that "Mahler makes the means of polyphonic style serviceable for homophonic purposes" (see p. 632), and that the polyphonic technique has a "homophonic clarity." This brings the idea presented in the opening chapter—that the main melodic lines guide the musical continuity—to a conclusion that seems radical, that the formidable contrapuntal virtuosity seen in Part I of the Eighth is subservient to the main melodic line.

Bekker's ideas about Mahler's themes and how he uses them are essential for a full understanding of his analytical approach. He argues that the character of the themes themselves, along with their possibilities for expansion, becomes more significant, as "thematic work" in the traditional sense becomes less significant. The themes are not simply pitch or rhythmic

structures built from motivic kernels in the traditional sense. They continually grow, evolve, and “become.” They are the actual generative force of the symphonic movements. Bekker traces the ability of these themes to function in such a manner to their origin in song melody, which is not beholden to the same rules of development seen in typical symphonic themes. Thus, the nature and function of Mahler’s symphonic themes, like the origin of each successive type of symphonic aesthetic, can be attributed to their strong connection to the genre of song—a genre, Bekker argues, that Mahler always conceived with an eye toward its expansion within a symphonic frame.

While the chapter as a whole is presented in a masterful way, it does raise important questions about how Bekker will approach the analytical and critical implications during the course of the following analytical chapters. The basic thesis—that Mahler’s works should be approached as a totality—is an ambitious critical precondition. Bekker’s hermeneutic approach is rather conventional, though he does enliven his interpretive narrative periodically with surprising insights. Many readers are likely to find the opening section of each symphonic chapter to be the most original. His introductory observations about form, orchestration, the special nature of Mahler’s thematic material, and so forth, often point the way for Mahler scholarship far into the future. Bekker does not develop fully the rich implications of the ideas he announces at the outset of the symphonic chapters, and there is often some disconnect between the provocative opening paragraphs of each symphonic chapter and the more conventional, chronological interpretive narrative that follows. Occasionally, Bekker will interrupt the descriptive analysis to ask another important question. For example, immediately after presenting the second theme of the Sixth Symphony’s first movement, he asks whether this is, in fact, a weak theme and if so, does it still serve its purpose well? Invariably, these digressions

lead smoothly out of and back into the flow of the musical descriptions, but the sense of disconnect between them and the chronological narrative is still perceptible. This aspect of the book is understandable, especially given Bekker's ambitious aim of considering Mahler's entire symphonic oeuvre. The questions about musical form in Mahler are alone enough to fill enough pages for another book at least as long as Bekker's complete monograph, and numerous scholars continue to grapple with these questions. Indeed, nearly a century of Mahler scholarship since 1921 has been influenced implicitly and explicitly by Bekker's pioneering work, as my critical commentary is intended to show.

The Individual Analytical Chapters

With the ground laid by the important opening chapter, Bekker embarks on his journey through Mahler's symphonic oeuvre. The First Symphony is "Das Vorspiel," the prelude. The scope and meaning of the Finale are important for his analysis—each chapter devoted to a specific symphony always has the "Finale Symphony" concept as a central thesis to support—but here, Bekker starts by outlining the motives of the work and their significance, particularly the motive of a fourth. These are "sound symbols" ("Klangsymbole"), another important aspect of Bekker's discussions. While he is generally suspicious of "program music," hermeneutic interpretation pervades his descriptions of musical events. Here, in relation to the First Symphony, the motive of a fourth is such a sound symbol, and Bekker is careful to distinguish this from any sort of "program." The fourth can be seen as an altered cuckoo call or as the emblematic interval of the song source for the movement without placing these perceptions in the context of a larger conceptual narrative. Instead of this, Bekker opts for more abstract concepts, such as the process of "Becoming," an important theme of the opening chapter. Here,

it is applied to the first movement's introduction, where the important motives are also first given. This focus on abstract concepts clearly prefigures Adorno's typical approach. Mitchell's work is a modern example of a hermeneutic approach to Mahler's output.¹⁶ Throughout the analysis of the First, Bekker is determined to distance the work from its published programs, which he correctly observes were drafted after the work's completion, although he does include the text of the Weimar program in his "Anmerkungen," a brief set of notes at the end of the book. The analysis of the work proceeds without reference to these programs, and the "sound symbols" are examined for their own sake. He probably goes too far with this exclusion, particularly in relation to the third movement.

There are frequent connections to other symphonies, such as a comparison of the function of this introduction with that of the Sixth's Finale. The Ländler-Scherzo, with its long sustained harmonies, is a type that will return as late as the Ninth Symphony. In this Scherzo, the legacies of Beethoven and Bruckner, whose scherzo movements were discussed at length in the opening chapter, are apparent. In relation to the third movement, Bekker emphasizes in particular Mahler's introduction and use of parody. The important topic of parody is also discussed in relation to Mahler's incorporation of melodies from his *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. In comparison to the *Wunderhorn* song sources for purely instrumental material in the Second and Third symphonies, these quotations from the early song cycle have a curious lack of emphasis here, and are discussed rather late in the chapter. It seems that Bekker may have withheld the aspect of parody and quotation as a sort of introduction to the "Wunderhorn" symphonies that followed.

¹⁶ See, for example, "Eternity or Nothingness," the essay on the Fifth Symphony cited above, or in the same volume, "'Swallowing the Programme': Mahler's Fourth Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, ed. Mitchell and Nicholson, pp. 187-216.

Bekker's formal outline of the Finale is notable. His reasons for not analyzing the movement in traditional sonata form are persuasive, but the resulting enormous "coda" is an aspect few later analysts have retained.¹⁷ The sheer length of the second theme is said to preclude development. This movement is the first example of the characteristic formal ambiguity in Mahler that will become apparent in Bekker's analyses of later movements, such as the Finale of the Sixth and the first movement of the Ninth.

The concept of the "Breakthrough" ("Durchbruch") is, of course, the aspect of this chapter that had the most far-reaching consequences for Mahler studies. Bekker introduces it in his analysis of the first movement, whose extreme contrasts of mood, particularly in the development section and coda, allowed for the great, "liberating" outbursts both here and in the Finale. It is doubtful that Bekker intended the word to be as pregnant and significant as it later would become through Adorno. It was, to him, an apt description of the musical process that led to these moments of triumph and liberation. Nonetheless, it is difficult to imagine that Adorno would have arrived at the concept without Bekker's use of the term to describe precisely the same moments and symphony that Adorno would use to introduce it. Adorno includes several long quotations from Bekker in the course of his book and makes frequent reference to him, but never cites him on the "Durchbruch."

For Bekker, the Second Symphony is another step on the way to solving the "finale problem." The number of movements is increased beyond four for the first time, and, as he says, the "formal clamp opens up." He does not see the "split" Finale as a completely successful solution. Bekker's inclusion of the Second in his group of "Finale Symphonies" that "orbit" around the nucleus of the Finale seems somewhat strange. It becomes clearer when observing

¹⁷ See the first two pages of Buhler's article, cited above, on this point.

his analysis of the symphony, which is heavily weighted toward the first movement. He does, however, praise the “strength of summation” and “organic direction to the end” in the Finale, despite the “breakthrough of the programmatic,” which Bekker says that Mahler still needed as an aid to achieve the goals of the Finale. He states that it is the first “grand symphonic finale” since Beethoven’s Ninth, and the parallels between these two “choral” movements are noted. The unusually long genesis of the symphony, and particularly the role of its first movement, would play an important role in later discussions and analyses, but it is not a major point for Bekker, although he does cite two important letters in connection with the composition and concept of the Finale.

If he underestimated the value of the published programs for the First Symphony, in the Second, Bekker nearly ignores them entirely, although there is evidence in the chapter that he was at least aware of several of their features.¹⁸ Bekker introduces other overarching concepts, however, such as key symbolism, formal ambiguity, and motivic analysis. Here, Bekker separates several germinal motives from the first movement’s main theme, which he is hesitant to label a theme as such. These motives generate the dynamic motion of the entire movement.

The use of song in symphony is another major point. The Second contains the first “orchestral transcription of a *Wunderhorn* song” in its third movement (a large-scale transformation of “Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt”), and the first wholesale transfer of a vocal setting with a *Wunderhorn* text as a symphonic movement, the fourth movement, “Urlicht.” Both types of self-borrowing would also appear in the Third Symphony. Only the former, that of an “orchestral transcription,” occurred in the First, and only the latter, that of a complete transfer of a vocal setting, would happen in the Fourth.

18 I include a brief summary and description of these programs in my notes on the chapter.

Bekker's attempt to view Mahler's oeuvre as a totality is clearly seen in his handling of the transition between the Second and Third Symphonies. According to him, the pantheistic view of a life in nature in the Third could not have occurred without the religious (or quasi-religious) experience of the Second. For Bekker, the Third embodies the process of "Becoming" as does no other of Mahler's works. In contrast to the two previous symphonies, Bekker discusses the program of the Third at length. This is because of the considerable amount of primary source material for the symphony's genesis. As mentioned above, Bekker includes two previously unknown program sketches along with several passages from letters Mahler wrote to Anna von Mildenburg, which he uses (despite having incorrect dates in some cases) to establish a narrative for the final stages of the symphony's composition.¹⁹ Bekker maintains that the Third is the only example of a program that was conceived before the composition of the symphony, retained throughout that composition, and carried through to the end.

For Bekker, the Adagio-Finale is the first one that makes a genuinely logical, culminating fulfillment of what has transpired before it. It is the first true Adagio of the fifteen symphonic movements that Mahler had composed up to that point, and the first movement that reaches a true rest and satisfaction, not a point of repose to gather strength for further activity. This rest and satisfaction are the fulfillment of love, the "universally animating power of nature."

The massive first movement is for Bekker the representation of "Becoming" in its earliest stages. It is full of formal ambiguities, such as the identity of the main theme, the border between the introduction and the main movement, and the lack of conventional thematic duality.

¹⁹ Mildenburg (1872-1947) was one of the most prominent Wagnerian sopranos of her day. Mahler introduced her at Hamburg in 1895, where she remained his protege until 1898. In that year, he brought her to Vienna, where she entered into a long-term contract, gaining enormous success and stature. Even outside of Vienna, for example at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, London, her interpretations of Wagner and Strauss roles earned great acclaim. In Hamburg, she and Mahler had a passionate affair, but when this cooled during the Vienna years, they remained friendly and collegial. She married the Austrian author Hermann Bahr in 1909.

One moment not given great emphasis by Bekker is one that caused puzzlement and some consternation among later writers: the extremely unusual onset of the recapitulation, where the opening horn gesture returns after the disintegration of the previous development and the abrupt entry of the side drum rolls. Thematic connections are noted between the first movement and later movements, especially the fourth movement (the Nietzsche setting) and the Finale.

Bekker's discussions of the remaining movements are structured with the destination of the Finale in mind. The song source for the third movement, the "animal piece," is examined at length, along with the implications of the post horn episodes. He sees the Nietzsche setting as a principal point of contact between the lines of the Second and Third Symphonies, but says that the path leads to a "freer height" than that of the Second, meaning the large-scale goal of the final Adagio. "The overcoming of pain is no longer a fundamental problem; it was only an episode of the ascent" (p. 303). This can also be seen in the following chorus of the angels and the morning bells. Here, Bekker does note the thematic connections to the Fourth Symphony, whose Finale was originally planned for this symphony (although he does not mention the similar thematic echoes of the Fourth's Finale in the second movement, the "flower piece"). According to Bekker, having effectively solved the problem of the new symphonic style for the first time, Mahler could move to the work that served as a culmination of the symphonies to that point, and the one which introduced the most novel type of Finale, as an epilogue or resolution.

The Finale of the Fourth Symphony, then, is also a "Finale of a Finale," as it were, the Finale of not just the symphony, but of the entire "Wunderhorn" cycle of symphonies. The symphony represents the culmination and resolution of the cycle and its Song-Finale is the ultimate resolution of the questions and problems raised in the course of the first four symphonies. While Bekker's analysis of the symphony treats the Finale comparatively briefly,

most of the opening material in the chapter is devoted to tracing its strands in the other movements. The more modest length and scope of the other movements, the completely different kind of themes, the more string-dominated orchestration—these are all a product of the symphony’s derivation from the Finale and its goal of arriving there. Associative tonality, particularly the “key of otherworldly rapture and transfiguration,” E major, comes to the fore.²⁰ The keys of E and G are paired throughout the symphony, acquiring a range of associations particular to this symphony, in addition to the larger symbolism of E major across other works such as the Second and Eighth. Bekker spends much time on external programmatic concepts such as the “Schlaraffenland” (the English “Cockaigne”), the presence of death in the form of “Freund Hein” in the second movement, and references to the bourgeois “Biedermeier” style of the post-Napoleonic era. Bekker’s discussions of these provide a vivid background to the symphony and its various extramusical associations, and they are further elucidated in my notes to the chapter.

His argument for the symphony as a culmination of the *Wunderhorn* phase is convincing, and he makes an effort to bridge the gap between the “Wunderhorn” symphonies and the following instrumental works. Bekker, however, fails to note the thematic correspondence between the climactic “kleiner Appell” passage in the first movement of the Fourth and the opening gesture of the first movement funeral march of the Fifth. Many later commentators also miss this connection, but it would have supported Bekker’s view of the symphonies as an interrelated totality.

The middle period instrumental symphonies—the “second cycle,” as Bekker terms them,

20 The term “associative tonality” was coined by Robert Bailey in his study of Wagner’s tonal processes. (See, for example, *Wagner: Prelude and Transfiguration from “Tristan and Isolde,”* edited by Robert Bailey [Norton Critical Scores. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985], pp. 113-46). It has since come into common use and replaced outdated terms such as “key symbolism.”

are given an extensive introduction. The new instrumental style is closely connected to the abandonment not only of songs as symphonic movements, but as the basis for instrumental movements. Bekker does concede certain thematic correspondences in these symphonies with the contemporaneous songs to texts of Friedrich Rückert, but he qualifies this by observing that they are “episodic” and “without influence on the development of the movements” (p. 396).

Bekker also emphasizes the “orchestral, architectonic, and formal” expansion of these works, including the shift of emphasis to the brass, the renewed emphasis on multi-movement sectional structures, such as the three-part design of the Fifth, and the expansions of formal types, most notably the scherzo (he claims that of the Fifth is Mahler’s first true example), but also the rondo, to which Mahler turns in the Fifth and Seventh symphonies for the finale. According to Bekker, thematic development, a secondary concern in the “Wunderhorn” symphonies, is now a driving force. The new concept of orchestration created problems for Mahler that persisted throughout his revisions of the symphonies, particularly the Fifth, a point emphasized by Bekker, who states that the Fifth suffered under the burden of the “iron armor” (“Eisenpanzer”) that Mahler found necessary here, by which he means the overly heavy reliance on the brass.

Bekker’s view is that all of these changes result from the detachment of the song element as a direct part of the symphonic composition, meaning that there are neither extended instrumental transcriptions of songs nor wholesale incorporation of vocal songs as symphonic movements. But this does not mean that song as a mediator fell out of play. This is, of course, one of the main points of Bekker’s opening chapter. The “episodic” references to the Rückert songs are a part of that mediation, and are therefore of significance, despite their lack of “influence on the development of the movements.” Thus, he discusses the Rückert songs at

length, both the *Kindertotenlieder* and the individual songs, such as “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,” and their influence on the style and aesthetic of the instrumental symphonies. They are the most “songlike” of his songs and therefore incapable of symphonic amplification. By this, Bekker means that these songs are distanced from the folk element, that they are “art songs,” setting the words of an identifiable and contemporary poet, closed entities whose meaning would not be enhanced or “amplified” by more extensive incorporation into a symphony. But the influence is still palpable. The first of the *Kindertotenlieder* not only has thematic echoes in the Fifth Symphony, but its closing line could also serve as a motto for the work as a whole: “Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt”—“Hail to the joyous light of the world” (see Example 5-1, p. 403). Bekker states that “at this point for Mahler, it was not about collecting thematic or poetic material for the symphonies in his song compositions. It was only to find and mark out the ground upon which a symphonic building could be erected” (pp. 404-5).

Bekker begins his analysis of the Fifth with another discussion of associative tonality as well as the movement between keys from the beginning of the work to the end, a concept that later scholars have called “progressive tonality.” The principal point in these observations is that the expressive character of keys and how they articulate the mood of the movement in question is of greater importance than the old concept of tonal unity across a symphonic work, where symphonies were expected to begin and end in the same key. He illustrates this by using the keys of movements to contrast them to other movements of a similar type. For example, he asserts that the C-sharp minor in the opening funeral march is a stark contrast to the C minor in the opening movement of the Second, to which it cannot really be compared. It is a more passive piece of suffering as opposed to the more active battle piece in the Second. In both cases, the keys are essential in determining the mood and character of the movement in question. In the

case of the Fifth, the change in key center from C-sharp minor in the first movement to D major in the Finale (anticipated by its use at the chorale climax of the second movement and again in the Scherzo) is also essential in establishing the mood and character of not just the movements, but the symphony as a whole. The meaning of the shift up a half-step from the opening of the symphony to its conclusion is just as significant as the choice of a certain key to correspond to the character of a certain movement.

Bekker considers the second movement to be “one of Mahler’s greatest conceptions of all,” and “one of the most powerful achievements of symphonic art.” Its key, A minor, like E major, has an extraordinary significance for Mahler. Bekker’s perception of the piece as being in a “clearly articulated sonata design,” however, is unusual. Other movements that have aspects of a traditional sonata design but show significant deviations, such as the Finale of the First and the first movement of the Ninth, are not even designated as sonata-form movements by Bekker. That is not to say that an analysis of the second movement of the Fifth in a sonata form is unjustified. Indeed, it would be taken up by later writers, but it has become a source of debate. Floros would cite Bekker here, only to be reprimanded by Mitchell, who believed that a perception of the movement as a sonata form was detrimental to understanding its structure, which is based on discontinuity, quotation, and interruption.²¹ In any case, Bekker’s analysis of this movement is one of the most extensive, detailed, and impressive in the book. His effusive praise of the movement continues in his comments on the culminating chorale. We are reminded in such cases that matters of form in Mahler are rarely simple, and scholars continue the debate to this day.

Bekker’s statement that the Scherzo is the “first scherzo in the classical sense of a dance

21 See “Eternity or Nothingness,” p. 285.

piece, and at the same time the last” is provocative, since it could be argued that the similar movements of the First and Ninth Symphonies qualify as such. Despite its great length, Bekker says that the Scherzo is “perhaps the most straightforward movement that Mahler composed.” The Adagietto is analyzed as a prelude, and Bekker spends time discussing its relationship to the Rückert song “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen” while keeping that relationship within the context of the “new,” looser bonds between song and symphony discussed at the chapter’s opening, bonds based on spiritual relationships and thematic allusions rather than transcription or incorporation. The Finale, Bekker says, is a new solution to both the problems of form and the goal of “Becoming.” Form here, both the fugue and the rondo, becomes a symbol for the process of “Becoming” in this movement. Unlike other such processes, such as that in the Third Symphony, here the goal is known from the outset. The collapsed chorale in the second movement is the inevitable destination at the end of the Finale, where instead of collapsing, it will reach fulfillment. This idea has been approached by several later writers, including Mitchell and David B. Greene, as outlined in my notes for the chapter.²² Bekker sees the processes in the movement’s large subsections, with their many diversions and redirected motions, as Mahler’s will paving the way for the arrival. The discussion of the movement as a solution to formal problems is effective, but in relation to the movement’s temporal and spiritual goal, Bekker does not address the question raised by later writers such as Mitchell and Greene: is the climactic chorale at the end of the Finale weakened by its collapse in the second movement, where, in its instrumentation and context, it actually showed more potential for a “breakthrough?” (see p. 460 and pp. 473-74, note 44).

For the symphony as a whole, Bekker again concedes that a programmatic interpretation,

²² See Mitchell, “Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 325, and Greene, *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), pp. 117-19.

based on the emotional progression of the work and its individual movements, is both tempting and easily accomplished, but sees such attempts as pointless. The musical language itself, including the language of forms, is of such an expressive clarity here, Bekker says, that any attempts at programmatic explication would be completely superfluous. Most characteristic are the paths to fulfillment in the symphony, which Bekker says are unique in Mahler's output: "He never attempted again . . . buildups of the insatiability that is shown in the second, third and fifth movements of this symphony, always breaking off again, and always climbing again to towering heights" (p. 464). These paths to fulfillment are a part of that musical and formal language that transcends any program. Indeed, Mahler never provided any such explication for this symphony, as he had, at least to some degree, with all four of the previous symphonic works. The long section at the end of the chapter, which includes these ideas, is an excellent illustration of Bekker's hermeneutic approach, his constant search for expressive meaning in the music itself.

The Sixth Symphony is a problematic work for Bekker. While he praises its dramatic structure and the power of its sound symbols—both motivic (the major-minor motto) and instrumental (the hammer and the cowbells)—he makes note of the symphony's relative unpopularity in his time and even seems to justify it. Speaking of the catastrophic conclusion of the work, he says: "There are few works of art, especially of music, that depict this downfall and make it known with such fanatical mercilessness or with such unrelenting severity. That is perhaps also what makes this symphony so much less accessible and even initially gives it something repulsive: the oppressive circle of thoughts and moods from which, in contrast to all other works of Mahler, it shows no way out" (pp. 482-83).

Bekker is also more critical of certain themes than he has been in previous symphonies, particularly the second theme of the first movement and the main theme of the Andante, although

he mitigates such criticism by asserting that these themes, despite their deficiencies, function well in that role for which they were intended. Bekker refers to a “textbook example of sonata form” in his discussion of the first movement, a more justifiable statement than his similar assertion about the second movement of the Fifth. Besides the appearance of an exposition repeat and a clear thematic duality in that exposition, the functions of the development and recapitulation sections here are closer to those in the traditional symphony. There are fewer interruptions, and the climactic moments of arrival are more conventional in effect, unlike, for example, the emergence of the chorale at the end of the movement from the Fifth Symphony.

Bekker’s analysis of the Finale is notable. Unlike most who wrote after him, he frames the development section with the two hammer blows, making it much shorter. Adorno, Floros, and others would build on the skeleton of Bekker’s formal analysis, but it remains unique, as most published formal analyses of this Finale. In my notes on the chapter, I point to the comparative chart of such formal analyses presented by Robert Samuels, in which Bekker is included.²³ According to Bekker, this is the first wholly successful Finale in the context of his first group of “Finale Symphonies”: those that have a direct, forward-moving ascent to the final goal. He goes so far as to say that the first three movements are reduced to the role of preludes, despite the considerable weight of the opening movement.

A surprising debate continues even today regarding the order of the middle movements. Such a debate, where the order of movements within a symphony is disputed and performed in different ways, is unique in the entire symphonic literature. Bekker does not make much of it. He accepts the revised Andante–Scherzo order, and he probably knew this order in performances he would have witnessed. Ultimately, the question does not play a large role in his presentation

23 Robert Samuels, *Mahler’s Sixth Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 72-75.

of the symphony. Of more importance to him, once again, are the Finale's role in the totality of the work and the Sixth's role in the totality of Mahler's symphonic oeuvre. In this context, the tragedy of the work is examined in contrast to the triumph of the Fifth that preceded it and the Seventh that followed. At the beginning of the chapter, Bekker says: "The burdensome gravity of a world view that brutally rejects every objection has something crippling in its awful one-sidedness. This tragic symphony thus belongs to those works in which the listener only arrives at an opinion of their purely artistic value after overcoming their substance" (p. 483). Not only does Bekker here add to his "justification" of the symphony's relative unpopularity, he also alludes to an arduous process of coming to terms with this particular work that mirrors his assertion (and Adorno's assumption) that each of Mahler's symphonies can only be appreciated in the context of its place within the whole. At the end, after the journey across this tragic landscape, he can assert that "the fact that the moment enters where strength is spent, where no more resistance or recovery is possible, this is indeed tragic, but only in the sense of material existence. The hammer can only crush that which is accessible to it, or that which it is possible to crush. The spirit that directs the will is not to be bent, not to be destroyed" (p. 535). This assertion provides his bridge to the chapters on the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, where Mahler's "spirit that directs the will" emerges even more strongly than before.

The chapter on the Seventh Symphony begins with a comparison between Bruckner and Mahler. According to Bekker, who, as indicated above, cites Halm's book here, it is possible to define a "typical" Bruckner symphony, but this is not possible for Mahler. Each symphony has its own special and individual character that cannot be used as a standard for the other symphonies. The Seventh is seen as a bridge between the conflicts of the two preceding instrumental symphonies and the grand unity of the Eighth. His focus, at least initially, remains

sharply directed upon the middle movements, which he sees as Mahler's most refined of this kind. The first "Nachtmusik" is characterized as the last retrospective of the march songs from Mahler's *Wunderhorn* period. He sees both of the outer movements, not just the Finale, as "day" pieces, and the entire symphony as based on the opposition between light and darkness.

In contrast to the Fifth, the Seventh is more concerned with thematic and melodic unfolding than with the sort of contrapuntal art displayed in the Fifth. Thus, its Rondo-Finale is based on variation rather than fugal technique. The introduction is briefer than those in other symphonies, but it is largely based on a harmonic process—the emergence of a distinct key center from the ambiguity of the nebulous opening. Despite this relative brevity, the introduction still contains the seeds for the movement's themes. These themes are conceived as building blocks of larger structures rather than as individual appearances, which (according to Bekker) perhaps limits their appeal, but increases their unique character within Mahler's oeuvre. Observations such as these point back to Bekker's assertions about the character and role of the Mahlerian theme in the "Symphonic Style" chapter, along with the fascinating ambiguity of those assertions. On one hand, the observation that the themes in the Seventh are building blocks of larger structures fits with his description of Mahler's themes as the "generative sources" of his movements. On the other hand, Bekker's implication that these themes have a more motivic character than those of other symphonies seems to indicate an exception to the idea that Mahler's themes are unfolded and expanded, rather than "developed." The opening tenor horn theme is perhaps the best example of the "unique" type of theme Bekker is describing here. It is fragmented, transformed, and developed throughout the course of the movement.

Bekker states that the harsh and dissonant harmonies of the first movement are hallmarks of the "emerging late style" that would find its fruition in the Ninth. These harsh harmonies,

along with the unusual key relationships and thematic characters, temper the regularity of the form in the movement. In this symphony, Bekker sees some miscalculation in Mahler's overly meticulous performance indications, such as the explanatory note regarding the fermatas in the second theme of the first movement. Bekker says that "the brilliant practitioner Mahler made the mistake of indicating the finest details, according to his own performance style, in his scores. He did not consider that such exactness brings more dangers than advantages" (p. 562). The danger is that through overly strict interpretation, Mahler's indications may become "crude caricature effects in performance."

Bekker could not have known the controversies that would later arise in the assessment of the Finale. In contrast to negative appraisals such as those of Adorno and Deryck Cooke, Bekker's enthusiastic and positive assessment of the movement may strike some modern readers as surprising.²⁴ His enthusiasm leads him to an engaging discussion of the nuances in the rondo form that are overlooked by the movement's detractors. Bekker's characterization of the movement as a "C-major dithyramb" has been frequently cited.²⁵ He sees in the movement the "summit of life-affirming confession" and "the maximum capability of instrumental expression." In this context, the movement forms the Finale of the instrumental cycle, just as the song "Das himmlische Leben" that closed the Fourth was a summation of the "Wunderhorn" symphonies.

The Eighth Symphony was not only Mahler's greatest public triumph; according to Bekker, it was an artistic summit that could only be achieved after traversing the two symphonic cycles that preceded it. It was also the point from which the preceding seven symphonies could

24 These negative appraisals are discussed in my notes to the chapter, pp. 617-18, note 44.

25 For example, in Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 207 or in James L. Zychowicz, "Ein schlechter Jasager: Considerations on the Finale to Mahler's Seventh Symphony," in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler: A Symposium*, edited by James L. Zychowicz (The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Madison, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 1990), p. 105.

be properly assessed. In it, as Bekker points out, Mahler needed to give voice to everything, to make an all-encompassing work that could express the message of pure, all-encompassing love.

Bekker uses the earliest known sketch for the plan of the Eighth, another document he presents for the first time, to prove that Mahler thought about the work as a symphony (as opposed to an oratorio or large-scale cantata) from the outset. Those who state that the work is not really a symphony misunderstand Mahler's message. It is not simply a dispute over a title. The Eighth represents a culmination of everything Mahler had understood under the concept of the symphony. It is, as Bekker claims, "the fulfillment of that which he envisioned as the original nature of the symphonic work of art" (p. 627).

Like so many later critics, Bekker strove to justify the pairing of the two texts, the old Latin hymn "Veni creator spiritus" and the final scene from Goethe's *Faust*. He does so by asserting that Mahler did not wish to create a *Faust* composition, but that Goethe's words were only a means of expressing the same sentiments seen in the hymn. "What drew him to Goethe's words and scenes was alone the idea of the appearance of love as a purifying, liberating, clarifying power," he says.

According to Bekker, another new style was necessary that corresponded to the forces demanded and the message of the work. The themes are accessible, human melodies that sound almost effortless. They stream from the "primary source of music." Bekker says that Mahler's declamation is not about presenting the text in the most efficient manner, and often almost goes against the meaning of the text. Rather, the primary motivation is to sing internally, giving the text a sort of musical objectivity. Bekker's emphasis of the Eighth as a kind of universal "Song for the Masses" can be seen as counter-intuitive, since many other writers instead emphasize the contrapuntal virtuosity.

Bekker does analyze Part I in sonata form and subscribes to the notion, today largely discredited, that Part II combines three movements—Adagio, Scherzo, and Finale—into one. This is important for his classification of the Eighth as the type of “Finale Symphony” that has a direct, forward ascent to the summit, but it is not of absolute significance for his analysis of Part II. The analysis of both parts proceeds in a relatively straightforward way, noting most of the musical correspondences between the two parts.

After the Eighth, what could follow? This is the question asked by Bekker in relation to the last symphonic cycle, “Der Abschied” (“The Farewell”). The answer requires a rather extensive introductory passage in which the characteristics of the “late style” are set forth. The new polyphony of the late style, along with the lines that Mitchell and Mahler’s friend Guido Adler would call “heterophonic,” are discussed in some depth, as is the new type of transparent orchestration, which is often almost like chamber music, particularly in *Das Lied von der Erde*. Bekker had not yet arrived at terms such as “heterophony” or Adorno’s “blurred unison,” but he keenly perceived the aspects of this new polyphony and orchestration. To arrive at an objective assessment of the “late style,” Bekker and later critics such as Mitchell have found it necessary to compare *Das Lied von der Erde* and its musical language to that of the earlier song cycles and the symphonies that stand under their influence.

Bekker claims that the work differs from earlier song sets or cycles in the organic unity of the songs and the presence of the large, predominant Finale. The first song, “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” is also large, but not predominant, and is perhaps analogous to first movements such as those in the First and the Sixth Symphonies. *Das Lied von der Erde* also represents a counterpart to the Eighth Symphony—a private and personal declaration in response to the very public pronouncements of love in the Eighth. Sound symbols again play a large role

in Bekker's analysis. The melodic A–G–E motive is a counterpart to the major-minor chords in the Sixth, but it is more concealed and subtle. Key symbolism, such as the use of A minor in the first song, is again a point of interest for Bekker.

While the opening chapter does not make direct reference to *Das Lied von der Erde* in the context of "Finale Symphonies," it is clear that *Das Lied* follows this model, and this is Bekker's justification for including it among the symphonies with its own analytical chapter. Bekker makes a memorable statement about how the large Finale, "Der Abschied," corresponds to Mahler's symphonic practice in general. Again, we see that Bekker's principal concern in the book is that of the "finale problem" and how Mahler overcame it. It is in this context that *Das Lied von der Erde* and its place within Mahler's symphonic oeuvre should be considered.

Nowhere is Bekker's position as a pioneer in Mahler analysis more clearly on display than in his final chapter on the Ninth Symphony. He was the first to publish a large-scale analysis of this work. With this in mind, it is fascinating to compare Bekker's views on the Ninth with those of later writers, and indeed, more deviations from later analyses can be seen with this symphony than anywhere else, particularly in the context of formal designations. It is also apparent in his perception of the relationship between the movements, which he regards as looser than in previous symphonies.

Bekker does not analyze the first movement in a sonata form, although almost all later writers do so. This is in marked contrast to his insistence on such a form in, say, the second movement of the Fifth. This does not mean that Bekker's perception is not valid. If anything, it shows that he is remarkably perceptive, as later writers have also noted the movement's deviation from norms of sonata form. Despite the rondo form of the third movement, Bekker is vague about formal divisions there, as he is throughout the symphony. Parallels with the Fourth

Symphony abound in Bekker's analysis. The dance movement is another "dance of death." The Finale is, like that of the Fourth, an epilogue and a resolution—this time, a resolution of Mahler's entire body of work. One of Bekker's most memorable statements in the book comes before he embarks on his analysis of the Ninth: "'What Death Tells Me' is the unwritten heading of the Ninth Symphony."

Bekker does not consider the Tenth Symphony, although Alma did give him access to the draft. There is a brief discussion about it in the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde* in the context of the "late style," but as with the publication of the letters and with the release of Natalie Bauer-Lechner's *Memories* under her own name, Bekker's book preceded the publication of the draft and the performance of two of the movements by just a few years. We can surely understand his statement that "this score will never be heard," and in 1921, who would have been in a position to call him a bad prophet? In fact, the nature of many of the sparest drafts for the Tenth may actually confirm Bekker's view that Mahler tended to think of the large-scale melodic impulse as the primary shaping force. Many passages in the draft have only a "main tune," sometimes with a bass line. If Mahler followed the same process in other works, the contrapuntal details would come later and would presumably be subsidiary, as Bekker hears them in a work such as the Eighth, with its "homophonic polyphony." I am grateful to Steven Bruns, who has studied closely the sketches and drafts for the Tenth, for this observation.

The chapter on the Ninth concludes with a brief, prophetic, and beautiful epilogue that points toward a Mahler Renaissance. A decade after Bekker's work, National Socialism would raise its ugly head in Europe, and public consumption of Mahler's music during that time would be one of its many casualties. Mitchell noted the "generally sorry history of the reception of Mahler's symphonies between the two World Wars," and pointed out that until the end of the

Second World War in 1945, there were large areas of the world in which Mahler's music was officially suppressed.²⁶ But that Mahler Renaissance that Bekker foresaw would occur in the 1960s and continue to this day. Bekker's epilogue is a final testament to a pioneering work of criticism that will now be available in its fullness to the English-speaking world. I am humbled by the privilege of carrying out this translation.

Notes on the Translation²⁷

The notes at the end of each chapter constitute my critical commentary on Bekker's text, a vital aspect of this translation project. These notes are generally of three kinds: 1) clarifications of details in the translation or musical examples; 2) citations and expansions of references by Bekker, including such things as correspondence, books, or other material; 3) references to later scholarly work that may help to elucidate either Bekker's text or the music in question. These are the most extensive and important notes. In them, I have traced some of the paths leading from Bekker to later criticism and scholarship on Mahler. Of course, the vast amount of Mahler scholarship since Bekker's book was first published makes it unrealistic to include everything here. My aim has been to present a representative sample that makes clear how important Bekker's work is for later Mahler research. I have avoided works that are primarily biographical, since Bekker's book is not a biography. My own bibliography at the end is restricted to works cited in the notes and introduction, including those cited by Bekker.

It has been my conscious effort throughout the translation to retain the character of Bekker's language while presenting it in idiomatic English. I nearly always retain Bekker's sentences. A particular area of concern in this respect is Bekker's frequent use of German

²⁶ "Eternity or Nothingness?" p. 309.

²⁷ The full text of Bekker's German original can be found at <http://archive.org/details/GustavMahlersSinfonien>.

sentence fragments, typically lacking a main verb. This is most common in the heavily analytical portions, usually in areas with frequent musical examples. In general, I retain Bekker's fragments when the effect is not jarring in English.

Larger titled works or groups of songs such as *Das Lied von der Erde* or *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* are given in italics, even though Bekker used quotation marks.

Bekker frequently uses Mahler's German score indications within the flow of his sentences. When he does this, he always uses quotation marks. My practice is to present these score indications first in English, since they form part of a coherent sentence, giving the German in parentheses. The only deviation from this policy is when a German indication is a major tempo or character heading of a movement. Italian score indications or musical terms are generally given in italics unless they indicate a major tempo heading, in which case they are given in standard type. Plurals of these Italian terms vary according to what I perceive as the most standard usage in English. Thus, I have chosen "*tremolos*," but also "*pizzicatti*." Bekker often uses "Violoncelli" or "Violoncello." In these cases, I have typically standardized the instrument to "cello" or "cellos" (not "celli").

Bekker's use of musical terminology is fairly consistent, and my effort has been to follow suit in translations of terms, applying equivalents that would be recognizable to English-speaking musicians. There are occasional slight deviations based on context. One particularly problematic case of a word that is not a specifically musical term is Bekker's frequent use of the word "Steigerung" and its plural, "Steigerungen." I render this word variously as "intensification," "heightening," "buildup," or "increase." None of these four alternatives is suitable for every instance in which Bekker uses this potent German word.²⁸

28 This word was given special meaning by Goethe. For an application of Goethe's concept to music, see Thomas

Capitalization of movement designations such as “Finale” or “Scherzo” varies according to use. When the words refer to specific movements, they are capitalized, but are frequently given in lowercase when the use is more general. There are exceptions based on my personal perception of what works better in each individual case. Words such as “Adagio” or “Andante,” like all other major Italian tempo indications, are always capitalized, even when it refers to a type of movement in general rather than a specific example.

Bekker’s title pages and sections within chapters have been retained. For the latter, I begin them with the first word in boldface type. Bekker uses an enlarged first letter of the first word. Bekker gives the complete text of all Mahler’s vocal movements, either in the body of the text, within musical examples, or a combination of both. The practice can vary from work to work. Notes are always given to indicate Bekker’s treatment of the texts and my approach to replicating that treatment. I provide the original German and an English translation in two columns when the text is in the main body. In musical examples, I replicate the German with an English translation in the caption, unless the text in the example is given in the main body. These practices are also in place when Bekker quotes a work with text that is not in the actual symphony, such as the song “Ablösung im Sommer” in the chapter on the Third Symphony.

My presentation of the musical examples is intended to make it much simpler for the reader to locate each passage in the original score than in Bekker’s original, in which each example is embedded within the lines of text without clear measure number or rehearsal number citations. All 888 of the examples have been digitized and set on a separate line within the translated text. Bekker’s manner of introducing them with a colon has been preserved. My interpolation has been in providing captions for each example. In these captions, I have assigned

Clifton, “An Application of Goethe’s Concept of *Steigerung* to the Morphology of Diminution,” *Journal of Music Theory* 14/2 (1970), pp. 165-89.

numbers to the examples, beginning with the chapter in which they are found. They are numbered sequentially throughout each chapter. Thus, “Example 7-58” is the 58th example in the chapter on the Seventh Symphony. For the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde*, I have adopted the formula “DL-8,” for example, indicating the eighth example in that chapter. This was done to prevent unnecessary confusion that would have resulted from either applying the number 10 to the examples from the Ninth Symphony or from using the number 9 continuously throughout the analyses of both works. I have also indicated the measure numbers and, in as detailed a manner as possible, the instrumentation for each example. I have made an effort to be as accurate as I can in this interpolation based on the most current available scores. As mentioned above, when the example contains text, it is also replicated and translated in the example caption unless the text is given elsewhere.

The reproduction of the examples remains true to Bekker’s originals, with a few minor exceptions, some of them practical. The most significant exception is that instrument names and their abbreviations are given in English instead of German. All German score indications are preserved. Some of the original examples contain errors, some of them quite significant. In general, Bekker’s originals are preserved even with errors, except in certain cases such as incorrect key signatures. Any errors that I have discovered, including the few that have been corrected, are indicated in the chapter notes. The few practical deviations from Bekker’s original examples have also been noted. I have made every effort to proofread the reproductions as meticulously as possible.

Finally, I have indicated in brackets the page numbers of the original German edition for easy reference and comparison, locating the number before the largest possible portion of the original German text as given in English. The differences between German and English syntax

mean that in certain cases, the correspondence will not be exact, and some words will find themselves on the “wrong” side of the inserted page number. I believe that in all cases, my insertion of the numbers has been careful enough that it will aid readers with a basic proficiency in German to easily find corresponding passages of the original.

Boulder, Colorado, April 2012

KELLY DEAN HANSEN

[1]

GUSTAV MAHLER'S SYMPHONIES

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[3]

PAUL BEKKER

GUSTAV MAHLER'S SYMPHONIES

Translated by Kelly Dean Hansen from the German edition
published by Hans Schneider, Tutzing, 1969.
A reprint of the edition from 1921.

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*Bekker's original Table of Contents is given here, with the original page numbers (indicated here, as in the course of the translation, with brackets).

**Bekker provides a separate entry for the chapter on the Ninth Symphony, but gives the same number as the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde*. He does not provide a separate title page for the Ninth Symphony, but he does begin a new running header. The section on the Ninth Symphony (treated in this translation as a separate chapter) actually begins on [337].

[7]
FOREWORD

The title states that this book is not a biography of Mahler, but is only concerned with the works. There are enough biographies of Mahler, and those of Specht and Stefan have the advantage of being written from direct knowledge and, in part, from shared experience of the personality and its destiny. What is to be said that is worth knowing about the man Mahler, insofar as it was revealed at all to outsiders, can be learned from them. It therefore appeared to me redundant to review what has already been said. A comprehensive account of the work, however, was necessary. It is not my intention to underestimate the preparatory works of others that have previously been done in this area. I have cited them in the bibliography and have, when they gave me something notable, used them for my book. At any rate, I believe I may say that the underlying plan of my work has been drawn up here for the first time. It was necessary to describe the complete works in all details and, at the same time, as a totality. Should I have succeeded in realizing this project, even if only approximately, then my book should, despite the absence of a life description, give a picture of the personality, for seldom has the work been the life, and the life the work, as with Mahler.

I am not of the opinion that critical discussions about this life and this work are already complete. But before we argue about it, we have the obligation to become accurately acquainted with it. Virtually everything that is said today against Mahler, and much of what is said for him, is based on insufficient expert knowledge. I have experienced this with myself as I, in the beginning of my critical activity, only assessed Mahler from a few symphonies that were coincidentally brought to my attention. Only as, little by little, I became close to the entire output through methodical study, did I recognize that here, out of apparent inadequacies and

contradictions, the image of a personality is formed such as seldom so strongly, intimately, and movingly walks through the ages. From this personal experience emerged the plan for a book that should bring Mahler's complete output to musicians and the laity in a comprehensible presentation, show the connections from symphony to symphony, and make understandable the internal set of laws and the organic growth of the whole. This attempt could only have the prospect of success if it did not remain limited to ravings and enthusiastic commendations, but gave detailed technical justification. The synthesis was the purpose, and the means to it must be analysis.

Thus, a collection of analyses is found here. They are furnished with many musical examples, so that the reader can supply a supplement to the word in a sensation of the sound and verify what is said. In general, the musical examples are held to a single line, not to save space, but by virtue of an easier overview. As far as it was possible and did not complicate the picture too much, I have indicated multiple voices in the later works that are inclined toward a polyphonic style, without however wishing to bring the entire score onto one line. It was always only about emphasizing the most important lines, not about completeness. The reader who [8] obtains the piano reductions or the study scores can easily supply what is absent, but I hope that the musical examples also afford a sufficient insight without aid.

For support in my work, I have Mrs. Alma Maria Mahler to thank. She granted me insight into the draft score of the Tenth Symphony and made important, previously unreleased sketches available to me. The collection of letters that is in preparation is unknown to me.¹ I do

1 Bekker presumably refers here to the planned publication of a volume of letters by E. P. Tal, which was announced in 1920 but did not materialize because of Alma's antagonism toward the publisher's release of Natalie Bauer-Lechner's *Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler*. Alma's completed manuscript of letters was published in 1924 by Paul Zsolnay Verlag. See *Gustav Mahler: Letters to His Wife*, edited by Henry-Louis de La Grange and Günther Weiss in collaboration with Knud Martner, revised and translated by Anthony Beaumont (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. xii-xiv.

not know whether and to what extent they provide information about works that will confirm or refute my account. I am, however, conscious of having gone to work with the honest will of the objective-minded interpreter. If a confirmation of my view of the necessity of this work and of the significance of the Mahlerian oeuvre was needed, then I would have found it in the joyous conviction that continually increased in me from the beginning to the conclusion of the book. In contrast, newer polemical attempts to characterize the advocacy for Mahler as a disparagement of Beethoven appear to me as fruitless and tendentious efforts. I myself wrote a book about Beethoven nine years ago.² If I now publish one about Mahler, then I see no contradiction in this consequence, but rather the natural continuation of a line that leads from the hero of the symphony to the most human of his followers. Here no “either-or” is required, only a quiet “as well as.”

Otherwise, it is not my intention here to polemicize against Mahler’s enemies. I wish only to show the work of Mahler as I see it and thereby to create a desire in the readers to likewise learn about it. If I succeed in this, then my purpose is achieved. If they have then really taken Mahler into themselves and experienced him with the intensity that such a creative output demands of those who relive it, then we will continue to speak and to advocate.

Hofheim im Taunus, October 1920.

PAUL BEKKER.

2 Paul Bekker, *Beethoven* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1911). It appeared in English as early as 1927 (London: J. M. Dent).

[9]

THE SYMPHONIC STYLE

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[11] **When** Richard Wagner viewed the history of the symphony as complete with Beethoven's Ninth and disparagingly rejected attempts at a continuation of Beethoven in one way or another, he had recognized, with the deep insight of creative genius, that the accomplishment of the Beethoven symphony could not be surpassed. He could have likewise declared that the development of opera was complete with Mozart and that further works of this kind were superfluous. Here as there, a genre had achieved its fulfillment, and here as there, the possibilities of the genre were in no way exhausted because of that. Just as the music drama of Wagner, following Weber, Marschner, and Meyerbeer, came in as a new kind of opera beside that of Mozart, not completing it, not surpassing it, but rather, fed by substantially different sources for its construction, supplementing it, so also, in the course of the 19th century, did a new type of symphony enter beside that of Beethoven, of a very different nature than it was, related to it only through the basic concepts of the genre, and precisely because of that, just as valid and equal to it. This new type of symphony was shaped and created by Gustav Mahler.

Three groups of musicians stand between Beethoven and Mahler. First are the middle German romantics with Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, and the academics that surrounded them. These are bourgeois musicians. The concept of the symphonic work of art as a mighty, aspiring, monumental form is reduced, downplayed, and led by them to an intimacy that is, in part, genuinely and inwardly felt, but is also not symphonic. The horizon narrows, the feeling becomes more specialized, from the human feeling of the heroic time of Beethoven to the literary interests and tastes of the cultured circles. A second group is formed by the program symphonists, with the appearance of Liszt as a leader who inspired enthusiasm. This group takes up more lively and more broadly spanning relationships into its environment, comprehending the monumental conception of Beethoven in an extensive sense, attempting to transfer it into

intellectual realms. The poetic program is the mediator. It produces relationships that can occasionally carry a surprising weight, that at the same time, however, undermine the essential condition of the symphonic work: a detachment from conceptual bonds. Symphonic program music forges these bonds once again. It succumbs to them in the gradual decline into illustrative music.

While both groups, fighting for success, dominate the field, a third grows in the stillness that comes from the absence of success: that of the Austrian symphonists. Franz Schubert is their herald, Anton Bruckner their strongest elemental force, Gustav Mahler their culminating figure. Like the program symphonists, these three also comprehend the monumental symphonic thoughts of Beethoven, but not, like them, in the extensive, but rather in the intensive sense. The program and the conceptual bondage that it causes remain foreign to them; also foreign is the poetic attitude, determined by taste, of the bourgeois romantics with certain levels of cultivation. Their art is again a creation of feelings without presuppositions. Beethoven's idea of humanity changes into the romantic idea of nature, and in place of the speculatively oriented ethics of the greatest cosmopolitan symphonic composer comes the pantheistic religiosity of German [12] nature worship. There grows a new symphonic style from the will of a new symphonic idea.

Beethoven's symphony is outwardly based on the four-movement scheme that was elevated to the norm by Haydn. It forms the traditional four movements into independent types of the sharpest individual character. These Beethovenian movement types contain within themselves a number of new problems that Beethoven himself recognized as such. First the sequence of the inner movements: the placement of the scherzo. Originally this could not be in doubt. It was determined by the complete type, which led from the spiritually active main movement over the intensification of feelings in the slow movement to relaxation in cheerful

activity, and only later inserted the minuet as a transition between the slow movement and finale. For Beethoven's symphonic type with the more weighty significance of his finale, this kind of sequence was no longer suitable. The scherzo and trio obtained an elevated independence, and in the Ninth Symphony, the Scherzo was distanced from the neighborhood of the Finale and assigned to the first half of the work. In this experimentation with the placement of the inner movements and the overall question of their design that arose as a result—for it was necessary that a change of their character would emerge from the change of their placement—lay the first problem of the complete form. A second was the slow movement. From the Fifth Symphony on, Beethoven avoids the Adagio type. Only the Ninth takes it up once again with full ardor. Here, the devoted release of feelings was conditioned by the overwhelming power of deeply penetrating agitations in the preceding movements, and the Scherzo, in its demonic intensification, formed the bridge to the dream world of the Adagio. From this reordering, Beethoven again created the strength for the deep breaths of the Adagio. But what should become of the slow movement where such tension is absent? As a pure song, did it still have justification within the symphonic whole? The Eighth gives the answer: although its tendency is definitely archaic, and hence externally close to the older models, it avoids both a slow movement and a scherzo. For Beethoven, both no longer belong to the essence of the symphony. They were only to be justified by their respective particular placements, and dropped out as soon as the inner preconditions for them were absent.

A third problem lay in the construction of the first movement. Not in details of its formal structure, but rather in its architectonic layout: in the question of the introduction. In the first two symphonies, Beethoven takes over the introduction corresponding to the model of Haydn. But from the “Eroica” on, serious confrontation with the introduction problem begins. The

introduction shrinks down to two massive *tutti* chords, while in the Fifth and Sixth symphonies it is completely absent, and the theme storms or cajoles itself directly at the listener. In the Fourth and Seventh, Beethoven attempts a new solution, following the precursor in the Second: the introduction as a gradual preparation is abandoned, and a separate movement of independent breadth spreads itself out. Yet here is also no solution. This introduction, imposing in itself, remains more ideally than organically bound to the work. The essence of the old introduction appears intensified and altered, but not newly designed. It is different in the Ninth. For the first time, [13] introduction and main movement are merged into a whole. They overlap, and their connection is so deep that within the movement, the introduction retains its gathering and intensifying strength. Here, the path to the solution was shown—and here Beethoven was finished.

The placement and character of the middle movements, along with the organic integration of the introduction, were the problems of design in the Beethovenian symphonic type whose solution he himself initiated. He still left aside the main problem, however: the formation of the finale. What Beethoven offered here, the apotheosis-finale in the “Eroica” and in the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Ninth Symphonies, was the correct one for his type, and was also far more powerful than what had been done before him. But it was neither the fulfillment nor the path to it. The struggle for the design of the Ninth’s finale proves that Beethoven had also come to this problem and sought to solve it. But here was the limit of his ability. He could not transcend it because, with the question of the finale and its structure, the question of symphonic construction in general was raised. The finale problem could only be understood and solved from a new comprehension of the idea of symphonic style. In this task of transforming the once cheerful movement of resolution into the main and core piece of the symphonic whole lay everything that

was decisive in problems presented by the symphonic art in general. It was necessary to discover the point from which the other questions—those of the middle movements and the introduction—could also be brought to a new solution, and symphonic multiplicity could be combined into a unity whose internal flow is uninhibited. It was necessary to set, in opposition to the old unwinding from the climax of the opening movement, an upswing to the climax of the finale as a new type. This was the problem of the new symphonic art as Beethoven had left it behind.

One can measure the symphonic disposition of Beethoven's followers in the way that they recognized the questions raised by him as questions at all. Under the bourgeois romantics were several who perceived, with a refined instinct, that which could no longer be developed in the old symphonic organism. What Schumann says about the Adagio, for example, shows that he was well conscious of the internal difficulties in this type of movement.¹ The insertion of the Allegretto into the symphony by Brahms demonstrates that he clearly recognized the inimitable nature of the Beethovenian scherzo type, and carefully went out of the way of this dangerous model.² The way in which Schumann and Brahms handled the symphonic introduction, such as Schumann in the symphonies in B-flat and C major and Brahms in the C-minor, attempting to give in the introduction the basic poetic plan of the work and to indicate thematic and poetic references between the individual movements, shows that they recognized the necessity of new connections. But their capability of symphonic design was not sufficient. It remained at thematic linkage and poetic reference, at the means then, that Beethoven himself had already used in the Finale of the Ninth. The core question, the structure of the finale, was cautiously³ passed over by this entire group of musicians. Either they fell completely back into the old scheme of the pre-Beethoven capstone finale, as Beethoven himself had done in the Fourth and

then, retrospectively, in the Eighth Symphony—thus Mendelssohn and [14] Schumann in all their symphonies and Brahms in the Second—or they were content with the Beethovenian apotheosis finale: Brahms in the First. Where the apotheosis as a resolution of tension was not made possible by the course of the work, the finale was given an elevated weight and emphasis, so that it stood internally equal in relation to the opening movement, as in Brahms's Third and Fourth Symphonies. A solution to the symphonic problem was not obtained thereby, and not even initiated. The Beethovenian type remained the model that was individually varied, as well as artfully and thoughtfully carried out in details, without touching on the stylistic foundations of the entire form.

Liszt proceeded differently. Perhaps even more clearly than the bourgeois romantics, he recognized the necessity of reconstructing the symphonic organism, and also recognized the individual problems: those of the middle movements, the introduction, and the finale. He solved them in the apparently simplest way: he drew the four movements of the symphony together, fused the opening movement and the finale together into one, and worked in the Adagio and scherzo episodically as needed. This cutting through the knot had something compelling in its simplicity, and one can esteem Liszt's action highly in accordance with its stimulating significance. But, in view of the task that was given, was it really a solution? Was it not rather only a bold and spirited circumvention of the symphonic problem? Liszt obtained the unity of the symphonic organism.⁴ He obtained it under the surrender of that diversity from which the problem, in a deeper sense, had grown up. With the sacrifice of this diversity, the original essence of the symphony in general, its multi-member construction, built up like a square, was surrendered in favor of an apparent monumentality. The development of the Lisztian type up to the most recent times confirms this perception. Liszt himself was forced in the two works he

considered his greatest—the *Faust* and *Dante* Symphonies—to separate the parts again and thus come closer to the conventional type of design. His followers also were only able to externally maintain the principle of fusion. In the latest large works of Richard Strauss, from *Zarathustra* through *Heldenleben* and up to the *Domestica* and the *Alpensinfonie*, the parts swell further and further apart from one another, and the need for a multi-movement structure emerges ever more clearly. The German romantics had, with all their inability to take hold of the problem by its roots, actually comprehended the nature of symphonic composition more purely than Liszt, or it stuck more deeply in their blood. The abandonment of the multi-movement structure was only a temporary gain. Just as much as the adherence to the multi-movement structure without an internally regulated reorganization, it was a continuation of the tasks incited and left behind by Beethoven. It was the work of descendants without an unusual creative gift born from the deepest understanding of its essential nature.

From Schubert, the earliest of the Austrian group, exist two works that testify to his commitment to the symphony: the great symphony in C major and the unfinished one in B minor. The C major, pointing back in the first movement to the symphony of older musicians, of a thoroughly non-Beethovenian character, singing out without deep thematic reference, laying out all moods of the heart in inexhaustible abundance, deeply serious and yet joyfully pressing forward; [15] melancholy in the Andante, shot through by the brightness of Jean Paul's spirit; filled with lusty merriment in the Scherzo, but not quite with full weight; storming along in bold, thundering exultation in the Finale. Here, despite the powerful scope, there is nothing to be felt of the symphonic problem. The genius of this work, if one ignores the appreciation of its substance, lies in the freedom and boldness with which it heedlessly rushes past Beethoven, and precisely therein shows its special power and fullness of life. The earlier drafted B-minor

symphony may have initially been similarly planned. It was not finished, however, and that is the remarkable thing. A sphere of moods is entered that thus far had been far from the symphonic realm of expression—that mystical, dark dreaminess that builds itself up from the hollow theme of the basses in oppressive repetitions and intensification to a piercing lament on the premonition of death, then, in the Andante, loses itself more and more in distant fantasies of unearthly visions—ultimately not to find the way back again. Why did Schubert break off here? We do not know the answer; we only know that he did it, and we can, we must comprehend it. This symphony was here at its end, for its continuation would have required a breath, an imagination, a strength for which Schubert did not have the power. He had begun the tension-releasing Scherzo and let it lie incomplete. He could not, however, devise the Finale of this symphony. Here it would have been incumbent to venture upon the grand symphonic project, to direct the opening movements into the Finale and to bring them here to a clarifying completion. In that Schubert refrained from this, he recognizably established the finale problem for the first time, likewise denying the possibility of a spontaneous solution when he abandoned the Scherzo.

This finale problem and the questions associated with it continue to be decisive for the Austrian symphonists. As the first and only ones, uninfluenced by the symphonic ventures of the German romantics as well as Liszt, they took up this problem, making it into the focus of their output. Here, the main line of development is further drawn, beside which all other symphonic designs are ordered. The Austrians were superior to the others, primarily through their naïve gladness in music making and the pure absence of preconditions for their artistic drive.⁵ They did not build on Beethoven, and did not attempt to continue this or that of his impulses. They left aside the Beethovenian symphonic art, with all of its spiritual undercurrents, and created from the same source as Beethoven, innovatively leading a strong stream of folk-like

impressions to it that were now obliged to lead it to completely different shores than the compass of the speculative Beethovenian ethic.⁶ In place of humanity, whose moral consciousness and personality had formed the center of Beethovenian spiritual and emotional life, came nature, with its wonders and secrets, with its inexhaustible, eternal charms, with its deep mysticism, touching on the original sources of religious feeling.⁷ This production of new symphonic material for creation was necessary for a new creative style to be found. None of the remaining symphonists had been able to find this new material. The German romantics as well as Liszt had only transferred Beethoven's human ideas to individual areas [16] and in them, each in his way, further expanded, thereby revealing the greatness of the model without being able to achieve its independence. The Austrians first undertook the journey to new shores. Not out of eccentricity, and not out of an intentional quest for originality. Simply out of the natural instinct of great and original creative talent that quietly passes by that which is inimitable, and carries strength within itself to place something new and also inimitable next to it.⁸ Thus Schubert, after the torso of his B-minor symphony, created the great C-major, an unconscious but powerful confession of the turn away from Beethoven. Thus Bruckner created his nine symphonies, faithfully praying to Beethoven, but avoiding his tracks and only occasionally bringing him a silent offering. And thus finally Mahler, bringing together Schubert and Bruckner, and also intimately passing through the German romantics and the Liszt school,⁹ wrote his symphonic oeuvre, this powerful synthesis of everything that symphonic art had experienced and learned since Beethoven.

But how did the new rules of design emerge from the new material?

The old symphonic composition grew from the idea of a play, and its buildup has its basis in the gradual resolution, the overcoming of gravity, the elevation to ever lighter forms of

existence and feeling, from the firm step of the first movement to the soaring of the conclusion. The Haydn-Beethoven symphonic type maintained this basic idea, only deepening it, giving it stronger spiritual and psychological values. But the character of the resolution of that which was bound at first, the release and evaporation of that which was originally fixed and firm, the idea of starting from something that was given, then leading it up into regions of free, fantastic play and rhythmically active joy—this all remained authoritative up to Beethoven's Ninth. The knowledge and the fact: the theme stood at the beginning of this symphonic composition that was directed toward the spiritual. What took place within it was no actual becoming and growing, as ingenious as the representative means of this becoming and growing were used.¹⁰ It was coming to a realization about what was there, an exhausting of abundance that is packed into the most succinct brevity. The first movements of the "Eroica," the "Pastorale," and the Ninth are basically only commentaries on that which occurs in their first measures. The powerful buildups that Beethoven created—the lines from the beginnings of the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies to their conclusions—unfurl with the compelling logic brought by the revelation of an event whose consistency is irrefutable. It carries within itself the immovability of the mathematical formula and stands there from the first moment on through its final implications as an elemental fact. Precisely in the unassailable logical force of this art lay its power, and even today still lies the unique effect of Beethoven's symphonic output. From it emerged the fundamental organic law that even Beethoven could not escape, even in the Ninth, this law that forced the concentration of the main spiritual ideas into the exposition, into the beginning, into the theme, and caused the whole organism to spring out, complete, from this beginning.¹¹

[17] The symphonic art of the Austrians does not know the logic of this "must," does not know these unalterable laws of an event whose course is determined from the outset.¹² It is a

symphonic art of becoming and germinating, an illogical symphonic art that gathers and binds together forces where it finds them. A symphonic art that only gradually finds itself in all the varied streams that flow into it and now, swelling more and more into a current, steers to the distant, initially still unrecognized destination. In this new set of laws, it is connected to the life in nature, out of which it grows, out of which it draws its strength, and like it, is apparently subject to chance, apparently arbitrarily formed. And yet only apparently, for out of this chance and this arbitrariness speaks a set of laws of a completely different kind than had been previously known and considered the only possible ones: the laws of Becoming.¹³ It creates its strength not from that which has been provided, but from the anticipation of the destination. The way in which the artist, without disturbing the informality and authenticity of symphonic Becoming, steers toward the goal, coming ever closer to it, always circling more tightly around it, until he grasps it and takes it in the middle, determines the level of his symphonic art.

One thing resulted from this as a natural consequence: that is that the center of gravity in the events of the symphony slipped from the opening movement, now more and more preparatory, over into the following ones, to the Adagio or the finale. Also casually resulting from this was the organic placement of the introduction into these symphonic events. It was the first call to assembly, upon which the main part of the opening movement followed in a steadily rising line.¹⁴ The question of the middle movements also now gained a new sense. The Adagio obtained through the preparatory character of the first movement an elevated justification for its presence, and frequently became the main movement of the whole work, in which all the gradually attracted forces gathered and accumulated before breaking into the finale by way of the scherzo, which was placed as a mediator. To the scherzo, new forces were brought by the non-poetic, natural incorporation of folk elements. They allowed a dependence upon the pattern and

the winged rhythms of the Beethovenian scherzo type without thereby hindering the ruggedness of the new dance type. There thus emerged from this new attitude, without any intention or speculative consideration, a solution, or at least the possibility of a solution to the symphonic problems, which it grasped within its innermost being and brought about the new birth of the symphonic organism from the spirit of a new artistic and world view.¹⁵

It was Anton Bruckner's historical mission to initiate this change, following the two great preparatory works of Franz Schubert, and to make it a reality through a powerful action.

Bruckner was the first who undertook to solve the symphonic problems left behind by Beethoven and who also brought them to a solution as far as an individual could succeed at this. He created the new symphonic introduction in which, as in the Fourth Symphony, the birth of the theme was carried out.¹⁶ He took away the spiritual predominance from the first movement, in that, while certainly leaving it with thematic fullness and strength, he gave it a more preparatory than decisive character in its course. From the theme as such, he took away the Beethovenian significance of a concentrated motto and gave it, through a lush melodic expansion, the character of an [18] opening line that only gradually reveals its nature. This new type of organic layout also caused a new type of thematic design. The thematic work molded after Beethoven, this tremendous, grand reflection of the sharpest compression of thoughts and of unwavering purposefulness, no longer found an inner foundation in the new symphonic style, which did not know the unrelenting will that came from a center of spiritual creation, but on the contrary was first required to gather its forces in the diversity of its appearances. Thus, the tight, organic thematic technique of Beethoven went out of use, or rather it became a subsidiary aid.¹⁷ In its place came a considerably more relaxed direction of ideas. It allowed broad latitude for melodic and harmonic fantasy. The aid of rhythmic architectonic structure—the breathing spaces of

fermatas and general pauses—were used not only as exceptional artistic resources in moments of the greatest heightening of affect, such as by Beethoven in the C-minor symphony. They transformed effortlessly into views of new things, to moments of calm for the collecting of fresh thoughts. Thus, the construction of the entire first movement obtains substantially softer, less purposeful aspects. The themes lose the sharp, commanding tone of Beethoven. They can now be modeled, and shape themselves out of the melodic line only gradually into firm, plastic forms. Even where they, as in the very opening of the D-minor Symphony No. 3, reminiscently pointing to Beethoven, enter in sharply molded versions, they obtain in the course of the movement and the work more the character of something that excites the fantasy than of thematic kernels born on their own.

If the preeminent position within the work is withdrawn from the first symphonic movement, then in compensation, the middle movements gain in significance. In general, Bruckner does not change their placement, and only in the Eighth and Ninth does the Scherzo come before the Adagio. However, both movement types obtain an impulse regarding content that actually makes Bruckner's Adagio and scherzo movements the first that were newly written since Beethoven. In these scherzos, that elemental strength and freshness which also imbues Beethoven's scherzos again truly comes to life. It does not come to life through the spirit of Beethoven, which here was the sweep of an impulse driven to the greatest frenzy. It comes to life through a native natural force that is thoroughly rooted on earth. In rhythms of the coarsest exuberance and elemental joy, it creates an expression, while reaching back to dance types, whose original character transfers a new blood flow of native folk music into the symphonic, artistic structure.

Perhaps even more powerfully than in the scherzos, the invigorating and new inner

creative strength is revealed in the Adagio movements of Bruckner. With him, they grow into the focal points of the symphonic action, in a rising line from the Adagios of the early works, past the mightily expansive pieces of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies, up to the Adagio movements of the Eighth and Ninth, which lead to heights far distant from the earth. That Bruckner was able to increase this force of the Adagio, this capability of the broadest and deepest singing out of the soul, this artistic version of an unrestrained swelling of a stream of feelings that overflows all dams to such an extreme, to the point where the listener's ability to sense it almost fails and only the oblivious [19] abandon that renounces every demand and every conscious intention remains—that was the highest gift and accomplishment of his genius. He exhausted himself in this accomplishment. It was the tragedy in Bruckner's creative output—if one can speak of tragedy in relation to such an output—that he certainly took up the structural problem of the new symphonic art, but probably also feelingly recognized that he was not able to completely carry out the solution. He foundered on the richness of his Adagio movements.

Bruckner attempted to solve the problem of the finale. He attempted to slowly raise the symphonic line up to the finale, to make this not only the external climax, but also the actual source of life for the symphonic whole, the revelation of the symphonic secret. The magnificence and boldness in the layout of his finale movements leaves no doubt about that which he envisaged. He never succeeded in the execution, not even where he reached for grandiose external intensification such as the addition of a brass choir, or to architectural aids such as the use of a fugal form. That which served as an advantage in the first movement—that absence of purposefulness, of the logical necessity, in the layout of the whole as well as in the design of the individual themes—this very thing became the undoing of the finale. Here it would have been necessary to provide a synthesis of both types of design and thus to obtain, if not an

advance beyond Beethoven, a continuation of his art in a developmentally relative sense. However, Bruckner failed here. He did not transcend that becoming and gathering of the first movement, and he did not attain, despite thematic references and allusions, a real concentration of the creative forces that had been evoked up to that point. He remained rhapsodic.¹⁸ Directly after the powerful upswing of his Adagio movements, after the mighty demonstrations of strength in his scherzos, the closing movements appear that much less internally grounded, that much more inadequate as conclusions of such a wide-reaching Becoming. Bruckner's last symphony remained without a finale—a symbol of that which was missing from this unusual force of nature in its ultimate ability to provide a final, definitive summation.

Bruckner had distanced the center of gravity in the symphonic course of events out of the opening movements, and had pushed it further into the middle of the work. He wanted to move it into the closing movement, but his musicianship and fantasy held firm in the Adagio, and the finale remained in the distance. Mahler came to the symphony with the same naïveté of the musical man in nature as did Bruckner.¹⁹ But he had two advantages over the latter: he combined with the naïveté of the Austrian musicians the perspicacious, superior intellect of the Jew,²⁰—and the work of Bruckner was already available to him when he began. How deeply this work must have spoken to him does not only emerge from the fact of his study with Bruckner. His symphonies also demonstrate it in the layout of many movements, in the shape of several individual themes, in the particular use of the brass choir in chorale-like hymns. The deepest influence of Bruckner on Mahler, however, is probably to be seen in the fact that Bruckner's work gave Mahler the clue to that design of the symphony that alone made possible a new development of the symphonic form: to the Finale Symphony. Mahler takes hold of this type in the first work that he writes. [20] The solution does not succeed immediately, or at least not in a

way that one can speak of an attempt free of imperfections. About the firm, deliberate embrace of it, however, about the hint of a grandly conceived solution, and with it the final breakthrough of a new conception of the nature of the symphonic work—about all this there is already no dispute from the first appearance of Mahler. The act as such has occurred, the puzzle proven to be solvable. Now come the most varied possibilities that genius invents for itself, always new, always bold in themselves, opening up still other ideas of creation, and each revealing a new set of laws in the organism.

All of Mahler's symphonies are Finale Symphonies. The Finale, be it short, be it long, be it, as in the First, a long-spun Allegro, or in the Second, a wildly varied and fantastic image distantly reminiscent of Berlioz, or as in the Third, a restful Adagio, or as in the Fourth, a mystically tinged idyll—all of these finales all the way up to the Ninth conceal within themselves the key to the work and are the center to which the threads of all the preceding movements lead and from which they are unraveled. One can initially assess this type of design externally: as the means to a grandiose buildup and intensification of the symphonic structure, a means that the older symphonic repertoire had not known. And this means is also initially understood from a structural instinct, and it is architectonically sensed. Its conscious employment attests to an awakening of the architectonic musical drive such as had not been previously known in such a demonstration and as it now came into the musical design in general as a new element. Furthermore, one can assess this type of design based on its internal consequences: as a means of creating connections between the individual movements that no longer require the poeticized and artful thematic integration, but instead now spin themselves out from an organic compulsion to the Finale and only here allow the strict regularity of their sequence and the firmness of their rooting to be recognized.²¹

But above these external and internal advantages of the architectonic construction and the organic unification stands, as the most important consequence of the new design out of the Finale, that it was only now possible to confront the complete symphonic construction free of conventional relationships or literary references, but purely from the necessities of the creative musical drive. The symphonic scheme required a four-part structure based on preconditions that had had an inner validity up to Beethoven, but then, under the relaxation of the monumental creative compulsion, had actually become insubstantial, resulting in a dry, conventional formula. In the moment where the finale became the main movement of the work, there immediately and retroactively emerged a new, free, and uninhibited position in relation to the question of structural organization. From the content of the closing movement, from the central symphonic idea that should arrive at its concluding pronouncement in the Finale, emerged the layout of the whole, the number of movements, their characters, their arrangements among one another. All of these were no longer optional individual factors that were attached according to discretion as supplements to the principal sum of the first movement. They were parts of a complete sum that was precisely settled in the Finale and for whose individual accuracy the Finale formed the infallible test.²²

[21] There thus initially emerged for the new symphonic art an independence from the previous types of four- or three- or one-movement construction, a freedom with respect to the pattern that was somehow perceived as schematic. Depending on how the final goal was devised, the type of individual arrangement formed itself. Mahler exploited the possibilities that were provided thereby to such a high degree that each of his works signifies an individual personality in itself in layout, organization, and construction.²³ Within these varied individual structures then appear again certain correspondences of the kind that represent varied solutions upon a

common fundamental basis. The first, most obvious kind is that of the direct, forward-moving ascent to the final goal. Mahler uses it in the First, Sixth, and Eighth Symphonies. The First is constructed in four movements, and thus stands externally closest to the old symphonic type. Despite the unity of its thematic structure, what additionally makes it appear related to this older type is the imperfection of the first bold undertaking, which was able to give the Finale externally, but not yet internally, the encompassing strength that should have actually come to it.

What Mahler took up in the First Symphony, but did not completely accomplish, became a reality in two later works, the Sixth and Eighth symphonies. Here, the buildup is led steeply upward with ruthless consistency, directly to the goal. There thus emerged retroactively a new type of structural organization: the no longer four-, but rather two-part construction, the separation into the preparatory and the fulfilling sections. As such, the Finale comes forward in both works autocratically and with paramount significance, in the Sixth pushing the three preceding movements, through internal and external force, into a secondary position as preludes, and in the Eighth absorbing the two middle movements within itself and assigning the opening movement the place of a powerfully reaching, independent introduction that thereby was still perceived as preparatory. This two-part structure, in relation to which the division into movements becomes a secondary question, is the sharpest consequence of the new design principle and one of the most significant architectural innovations of Mahler. The complete organism is transformed from the inside out. Under the compulsion of the necessity that drives toward the Finale, the front of the construction is compressed together. The whole power of the creative will leads with unrestrained force up and into the Finale.²⁴

In only these three works—the First as an experiment, and the Sixth and Eighth as a fulfillment—did Mahler choose the inexorably straight kind of structure. In a group of

symphonies that lies between them, a new type appears: one with an arrangement of movements that, as it were, orbits the nucleus of the Finale. The Second, Third, Fifth and Seventh Symphonies belong to this group. The Finale is again the center, but the preceding movements do not lead up in a direct ascent; rather, they settle themselves around it, thereby circling it ever more narrowly. The opening movements, as the most broadly drawn circles, newly obtain a greater scope and strength of content, while the middle movements become narrower and their number increases. Suite-like elements enter the symphonic work, not added due to external speculation or overly enthusiastic music making, but rather determined by the stepwise sequence of the inner development. Thus, similarly as in the great [22] quartets of Beethoven, the number of movements in the symphony increases. Beside the scherzo and slow movement come new, songlike pictures with a fantastic richness of forms. The Second Symphony has five, the Third six, the Fifth and Seventh again five movements each. The division into parts is also again taken up here, and it gives the symphonic whole a larger, unifying structure. Mahler's architectonic strength shows itself here with the greatest surety, and reaches out most widely. The final movements of these works differ thereby from those of the first group in that they are not the most externally weighty, yet they are constructed in diverse ways. The closing section of the Second Symphony is a solemnly tuned choral movement introduced by a grand, sweeping instrumental passage, the Finale of the Third is an Adagio, and the last pieces of the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies are rondos. With the exception of the Second, the Finale in all these symphonies does not obtain its central placement within the work—as in the First, Sixth, and Eighth Symphonies—through its own great weight, but rather only through its relationship to the remaining movements. In purely objective significance, these are sometimes superior to the Finale, such as, for example, within the Second and Third Symphonies the first, and within the

Fifth Symphony the second movement reaches out most powerfully. They only obtain their inner justification and foundation, however, and their spiritual solidification, through the concluding Finale.

Beside these two types, the arrangement of movements that ascends in a straight line to the final summit, and the one that forms a circle around the central finale, is found yet a third kind. It holds the middle ground, so to speak, between the two others, which are perceived in strict opposition to each other. Mahler only used it twice, both times in works that have a conclusive character: in the Fourth and in the Ninth Symphonies. The finales of these two works are not summits, as in the First, Sixth, and Eighth Symphonies, but are closer to resolutions in the sense of the Second, Third, Fifth, and Seventh. And yet, with them, one cannot speak of a circular or suite-like arrangement of the preceding movements. Here is shown a fantastically floating construction, and any systemic movement order is absent. The arbitrary mood of the creator, who only follows the impulse with an almost Schubertian lack of concern, appears to rule. They are the two most mature, transfigured works of Mahler, both kept in four movements, but thoroughly divergent from the previous type of the four-movement symphony. The Fourth most closely still resembles earlier patterns, at least in the first three movements. Its Finale is a slow song movement, not striking by any external weightiness, a completely unpretentious and simple resolution of a work that is unproblematic in itself. There is no buildup, then, rather a bright transfiguration of the original idea that is carried out with a lightly programmatic echo.²⁵ The Ninth Symphony occupies an even more unusual position within the complete Mahlerian oeuvre. It is also in four movements, but this four-movement design almost appears as a mockery of its conventional precedent. The principle of the movement sequence is turned inside out: two slow movements, the first an Andante, the last an Adagio, frame two lively ones, a

scherzo and a burlesque rondo. The closing Adagio is also a transfiguring resolution here, without matching the preceding movements in external weightiness, and also here one cannot speak of either a rising line or an orbit around the finale. [23] It appears that Mahler, similar to Beethoven in his Ninth, strove for a new type of symphonic construction, that he attempted to find a kind of organic emergence of the symphony that gravitated more toward the middle and viewed the Adagio Finale no longer as the goal, but rather as an epilogue-like conclusion.²⁶

That was a possibility. The question of whether and how it would have been able to be brought to reality can no longer be asked today. Only the basic recognition of the elemental importance of the organic design principle for the symphonist is decisive. In the rhythm of the complete course of events lies the first, greatest, decisive effect of the symphonic work. The single tone, the phrase, and the melody in itself are only constructive elements of a subordinate kind. They only obtain significance through the surroundings in which they are placed, through the sequence within which they unfold. The symphonist is the builder, and the kind and choice of building blocks is not decisive for him, but rather the discovery of the constructive idea. From this idea that determines the structure, organization, number, and character of the movements now also emerged the special kind of individual stylistic elements, along with the intellectual and technical structure of the execution. The ideal conception, the vision of the whole, was the primary thing, and in it the generative symphonic force was revealed. Mahler's special musical nature was one of conceiving and of giving birth, and these were the emotional sources of his being, which, not capable of forming themselves, strove toward fertilization through the symphonic principle of design.

Mahler's symphonic work divides itself into four groups. The first extends to the Fourth

Symphony, the second from the Fifth to the Seventh. The Eighth stands separately, and the Ninth in turn follows directly upon *Das Lied von der Erde*. Each of the groups springs from the emotional source of a certain song cycle that is closed in mood and in thought. The common foundation for the first group of symphonies up to the Fourth is the folksong-like element. In the First Symphony it is based on the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (*Songs of a Wayfarer*), in the Second, Third, and Fourth on songs from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. The songs to poems of Rückert provide the frame of moods for the second group of symphonies from the Fifth to the Seventh. The Eighth Symphony, assembled from the old church hymn “Veni creator spiritus” and the closing scenes of Goethe’s *Faust*, obtains its character from these texts. The Ninth reflects the world of feelings, entered with *Das Lied von der Erde*, of the old Chinese lyrics as adapted by Hans Bethge.

It is curious: Mahler’s symphonic art, determined in its organic manifestation by the broadly and powerfully constructive monumental drive, finds its emotional sources in the smallest musical manifestations of form, in the song.²⁷ Song and the monumental drive strive toward one another in Mahler. The song is lifted up from the confinement of the subjective expression of feeling into the broadly shining and sounding sphere of the symphonic style. This in turn enriches its outwardly expansive force with the intimacy of the most personal feeling.

[24] This appears to be a paradox, and yet in such a unity of opposites there lies an explanation for the unusual nature of Gustav Mahler, which encompasses the inner and outer world, drawing the most personal and the most distant into his realm of expression. It explains his often so externally contradictory art, which indiscriminately scrambles together the most apparently heterogeneous elements of style. It explains the contrasts in the assessment and evaluation of his creative output.²⁸ Finally, it explains the slowly but inexorably advancing effect of his works,

which, combining folk and art music, again draws from a deep well that gives the wide-reaching form the intensity of ardent intimacy and the subjective experience of feeling the powerful resonance of a sweeping composition that aims for greatness.

The songs form not only the emotional core of most of the symphonic works, but also provide the stylistic foundations. In the choice of song type, in the character of the poetry to which Mahler turns, the world of imagination that attracts him in each phase of his life, and from which he finds his creative guidelines, can already be recognized. The *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* grew out of a harrowing youthful experience. He composed the texts himself while freely utilizing a single *Wunderhorn* song. It is typical how Mahler here matched the style and character of the *Wunderhorn* poetry with such adaptability, how he himself created something that corresponded with the compulsion toward an intimate and unpretentious folk style. In the moment, however, when Mahler gets his hands on the complete *Wunderhorn* volume, it is as if the curtains fall for him and he has suddenly found the key to his own essence. A large group of songs emerges, written for one voice with orchestral accompaniment. A substantial portion of these songs passes into the symphonies, some with texts in their original versions, others transcribed into a purely instrumental language until, with the quietly fading closing song of the “heavenly joys” in the Fourth Symphony, that expressive area is exhausted for Mahler. The *Wunderhorn* book closes, for this world has been passed through. The artist has witnessed its deep, intimate cries of pain, along with its naïve faith, its coarse, sarcastic humor, and all of its precious, pure, and strong impressions up to the beatified child’s dream of that moving final song about the delights of the fairy tale paradise. He has artistically conquered all this, and now grasps a new walking staff for the journey into another land.²⁹

This time of folk-based song-symphonies lasted fifteen years, from the composition of

the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* in 1884 to the completion of the Fourth Symphony in 1900, or to the conclusion of Mahler's fortieth year. It determined the character of Mahler's appearance for his contemporary world and its immediate posterity, for, apart from the Eighth Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde*, the knowledge of Mahler today is still almost exclusively based on the first four symphonies and the songs that belong to them. How is this profound connection between song and symphony to be understood as necessary when coming from Mahler's nature and as justified by the nature of his symphonic composition, and what are the inner sources of this will toward the folk character?

[25] It was not a will in the sense of a conscious intention. It was an elemental will that spoke and pressed out of Mahler, leading him onto paths that none before him had walked, and that he himself only trod under the force of somnambulism. Mahler was a naïve, faithful, and simple nature, endowed with a prophetic vision for all that grew out of an unselfconscious and quiet originality. He was filled with a burning desire to break through the layers of distorting educated intellect that lay above the pure humanity of the natural being.³⁰ Out of the mixture of both elements in his being grew for him the tragedy of existence and creation. Out of the conflict of his own nature he arrived at the establishment of the two opposing principles of his creative work: the song as a symbol of the innermost feeling and experience, as the expression of longing for the sources of personal existence and of the knowledge of oneness with the original sources of nature—and the symphonic style as the method of confrontation—with the world and with laws and with events—that most powerfully reached into general consciousness. Mahler recognized these oppositions of subjective feeling and world events, of desire and law, of song and symphony as polarities of his creation. To find the unity between this desire and this law of the world was the last goal of his symphonic composition, to which he strove in all his works on

ever new paths.

If one allows Mahler's symphonic movements to affect oneself, naïvely comparing and contrasting them with those before and contemporary with him, the realization of a harsh contradiction imposes itself. One feels that a different principle of life than that to which one was previously accustomed rules and works in these sounds and individual structures. Even with Bruckner, to whom Mahler stands closest, the contrast to the previous concept of the symphonic is not as distinctly palpable as it is with Mahler. It is a difference like the one between studio and open-air painting. Old fundamental views that were held as unalterable are disregarded, while other kinds of expression that were held as unusable come into play, taking over in a self-evidence that initially calls forth astonishment and smiling wonderment. The concept of the artistic—strictly self-contained and majestically turned away from the ordinary—falls apart, and is never brought forth as special or important. The work, the technical boldness in melodic themes, in harmonic modulation, in instrumentation, loses its particular significance. Where it becomes noticeable, it appears almost more as a coincidental consequence of ineptitude than as a cleverly devised subtlety. The whole makes the impression of a badly concealed primitiveness coming from incompetence, and the sophisticated listener, expecting all kinds of difficulties of the usual kind, is disappointed in the apparently minimal demands of his artistic understanding.³¹

The first movement may retain in many cases the usual sonata scheme. Yet of the urgent, tense, purposeful spirit of the sonata, almost nothing remains. The structure appears only to strive to blur the sonata character as much as possible.³² Either the relationships of the outlines and the parts are compressed, making the individual groups insignificant, as in the opening movement of the First Symphony, or, as in the first movements of the Second and Third Symphonies, sections of such powerful scope are inserted that the listener who is accustomed to

the usual structure [26] loses track of the overview and feels driven into endless space. The smooth flow and the continuity of that which is typically called development is often interrupted and redirected. Obstructions seem to appear everywhere. The middle movements touch on similar strangeness. The usual three-quarter scherzo type is almost completely avoided by Mahler, and is only used in two symphonies, the Fifth and the Seventh. In the remaining works, Mahler favors a new type, inspired by Schubert's and Bruckner's trios, that now inclines to the minuet, now the slow Ländler,³³ and now the more lively waltz, but in all cases brings a piece of naturalistic life into the symphony and thus willfully profanes, as it were, the artistic rigor of the symphonic concept. In addition, Mahler is often not satisfied with one scherzo-like movement. In the Second, Third, and Seventh Symphonies, yet other dance- or song-like intermezzos are inserted, which in the Second and Seventh must substitute for the missing slow movement. The slow movements themselves are treated most concisely and most strangely. In the nine symphonies of Mahler, no more than two largely conceived movements of the pure Adagio type are to be found. In both cases, they stand at the conclusion of the works: in the Third and in the Ninth Symphonies. Mahler knows from Bruckner the dangerous power of the Adagio. He knows that the wide-reaching Adagio easily soaks up the juices of the work. He draws the most obvious conclusion from this knowledge: he places the Adagio, when he uses it, at the conclusion of the work, as the great collecting reservoir of all spiritual streams, as the place of their most intensive internalization. Where he once, as an exception, uses it before the Finale—in the Fifth Symphony—he is careful of giving it too much weight or emphasis. It remains an Adagietto in both name and content and appears more as a slow prelude to the closing movement. In all other works where Mahler uses slow middle movements, he is satisfied with the calmer and less intensive Andante type—such as in the Second, where this Andante appears as a minuet,

in the Fourth, where it appears as a gradually more animated variation sequence, and in the Sixth, where it has a songlike character.³⁴

If the normal appearance of the symphony is changed by this sequence and character of movements, then the way in which Mahler incorporates the singing voice into the symphonic organism signifies the most striking and fundamental deviation from the familiar. Inspirations from Berlioz may have resonated vividly, yet they can only be viewed as of an external kind. With Berlioz, the incorporation of the voice—in *Faust*, in *Romeo and Juliet*—always goes back to the concept of a symphonic-operatic hybrid effect. With Mahler, it remains strictly within the symphonic frame. A certain correspondence with the old models of Beethoven and Liszt regarding the use of the choir can best be established with the Resurrection Chorus in Mahler's Second. But these apparent similarities vanish in view of the way in which Mahler integrates the individual voice into the symphonic work. Now he gives it within the symphony—in the Second and Third—the meaning of a clarifying inner spiritual voice, slowly awakening to consciousness out of the mysterious instrumental world. Now, as in the Fourth, he assigns to it the redeeming final word that expresses the last things in a charming allegory. [27] In *Das Lied von der Erde*, he elevates it to the sole messenger of his ideas. In his outwardly mightiest work³⁵ he deploys it in all of its expressive possibilities: double choir and boys' choir with multiple solo voices in the center of the symphonic events. From this method speaks more than an imitation or an outward exaggeration of Beethoven, Berlioz, or Liszt. The use of the singing voice is one of the peculiarities of Mahler's musical language. Like the treatment of the orchestra, like the style of the themes and melodies, of the harmonic and rhythmic structure, of the dynamics and voice leading, and of the performance method, it also flows from the single source of a new musical conception, of a new musical world view and picture of life. In its reception and proclamation,

the actual creative idea in Mahler's appearance is determined. As his overall symphonic idea stands in fundamental opposition to the symphonic idea of Beethoven, so also does Mahler's musical language, with all that branches out from it, grow from a similar contrast to the musical language of Beethoven and those who followed him.

Beethoven's language is a language of abstraction. It blossoms from the cult of a vocal art that is raised to the utmost heights. It takes up the developmental idea that leads away from this vocal art to the dominance of the purely instrumental idea, and it wins and consolidates this dominance in that it lays hold to the instrumental idea as the most subtle reinforcement of the capacity for musical expression. Beethoven's art is a compression of every relationship. Each expression is driven to the utmost intensity and refinement, to the absolute extraction of spiritual essentials. The entire development of Beethoven's musical language, the method of his formal construction, his themes, and his handling of sound can be led back to this striving for the most extreme abstraction and spiritualization of musical sensation, corresponding to Beethoven's personality with its urge to comprehend the last spiritual impulse of motion, its drive to desensualize the sensual nature of things, its desire for criticism and for recognition.

Mahler stood at the end of a time of purely instrumental sensibility. The vocal element had fallen so strongly into decline since Beethoven that vocal music itself borrowed its stylistic rules from instrumental expression.³⁶ The urge toward abstraction had been driven to its exhaustion, to an ossification in conventions. There remained only the opposing path toward sensualization, to a softening and dissolving of musical language out of the bonds of the instrumental will toward spiritualization, to the renewed expansion of what had been powerfully compressed, to a view that was no longer critical, but that had a naïve faith in revelation.

From this demonstrative and sensual urge of Mahler the artist and man emerged the inner

necessity of his use of the human voice within the symphony. The voice arrived at its pursuit of sensualization not only through the words of text which it spoke. This would be the minimum, and a purely external gain. It brought above all a living, immediate, and warm stream of feelings into the instrumental sea, and this was likely what Mahler required. Its use followed from the emotional requirements of the sonic design, not from any intent of intellectual explanation or enhancement. It sprang from the orchestra, [28] from the idea of the sound, from the concept of a new nature of the appearance of sound in general.

Beethoven's world of sound, as represented for the symphonic composer in the orchestra, had developed from a gradual summation of individual phenomena. In slowly finding and complementing each other, the instruments had come together, each sacrificing something from its individuality in this juxtaposition, but without giving it up. Beethoven's orchestra was a republican unity, each instrument serving the same goal, but each at the same time an entity itself with its own set of laws. Thus, the human voice, when it joined the orchestra, also remained a representative of the human organism, an individual, a companion, freely joining the great whole, not out of a natural necessity.³⁷

The orchestras of the romantics and program symphonists show the same relationship in comparison to Beethoven, as is reflected in the manner of their symphonic conception and design. They either adhere to Beethoven's scheme, partially shaping it, as particularly Brahms does in his middle movements, further toward the side of chamber music. Or they strengthen, as do Liszt and his followers, out of a strong coloristic fantasy, the luminosity and intensity of the colors, but without thereby changing the basic character of the orchestra as an overall sound.

Mahler's orchestra does not take part in this revelry of colors found in the New German School. In Mahler's instrumentation, the contour is decisive. Everything regarding color is

handled with an almost contemptuous hardness and ruthlessness.³⁸ With Mahler, the individual nature of the single instrument also vanishes. The orchestra as a naturally closed, total appearance that has become completely integrated is what he gives. The individual instrument occasionally detaches itself for certain moments as an exceptional exercise of free will, but without ever obtaining independence beyond the episodic significance of a brief instrumental effect. This orchestra is no republic, no summation, not an organized multiplicity that a superior will forms into a unity. It is made by nature into this unity, and it is a sonic appearance of itself. It is a sounding cosmos in which countless stirrings of life unfold, push, and spread out, and yet each one always only draws life and strength from the complete manifestation. This cosmic sound arises from the new conception of the musical event in general as something natural, elemental, as a pure declaration of feelings. It corresponds to the new materials of design, the new organism, and the new constructive plan of the symphonic type, just as on the other hand the Beethoven orchestra in its idealized individualism, with its being directed toward the sharpest isolation of the idea, corresponded to the basic course of Beethoven's symphonic art toward the abstract, the critical, the cognitive recognition.

From the cosmic concept of sound in this orchestral idea resulted the necessity of its arousing everything to sound, of incorporating everything into this enlivening that was hidden within the sounds of life. Thus, the singing voice flowed as a phenomenon of sound, unbound from everything humanly personal, into this sounding world. So in Mahler do the individual sound groups grow to mighty dimensions, both in number and in sonic mass. The woodwind group is multiplied, D and E-flat [29] clarinets are frequently added, and four-voice scoring of the woodwind choir is typical. In the brass and the horns, similar expansions are found. On multiple occasions, similarly as in Bruckner, the heavy brass is used in separate groups. At the

same time, all instruments, even those that are otherwise unwieldy and cumbersome, obtain an unusual mobility. Such instruments that were previously never found in the symphony orchestra are enlisted for important isolated effects: the flügelhorn in the post horn episode of the Scherzo of the Third Symphony, the tenor horn for the presentation of the theme in the first movement of the Seventh Symphony. The group of percussion instruments is treated with particular diversity. In Mahler it is expanded, with the inclusion of various innovations—sleigh bell sounds in the Fourth, a hammer in the Sixth—into a real small orchestra. Of other innovations, the most striking are the cowbells in the Sixth Symphony and the retuning of the solo violin a step higher to characterize the flat fiddle sound of “Freund Hein” in the Fourth Symphony. To achieve special sound effects, the brass and woodwinds are often asked to raise their bells. It is hardly necessary to mention that Mahler places extraordinary requirements on the technique of the strings. Yet these requirements, in contrast to, say, the orchestral technique of a Richard Strauss, are less extraordinary in relation to the agility of the left hand, just as Mahler’s overall orchestral language is far removed from everything that dazzles and captivates through instrumental brilliance. It is more the difficulty of the expressive concept, the connection of very distant registers, the sudden transitions, his strange kind of *glissandi*, the unexpected, whose style is difficult to capture, even when of an apparent crudeness, that appears foreign and unwieldy to the string players in Mahler’s symphonies. In addition, there are bowing effects, prescriptions of phrasing that are often very uncomfortable to execute but are of great conceptual importance, unusual demands of a strong vocal element in the presentation, and formations with persistent rhythm that go against habit. In all of this, a highly imaginative diversity reigns. The full strength is in no way typical for Mahler, as he often sets it in contrast to unadorned simplicity within a work. Thus, in the Fifth Symphony, the opening and closing movements, which are

particularly heavy-laden with brass, in contrast to the Adagietto, written only for strings and harp; in the Seventh, the massive outer movements in contrast to the idyllic second “Nachtmusik”; and in the Ninth, the grotesque middle movements in contrast to the final Adagio, which sings itself out with celestial transfiguration in the string orchestra. An entire work also occasionally displays such restraint: the Fourth Symphony is written without trombones.

This treatment of the orchestra is closely related to Mahler’s manner of presentation, dynamics, and phrasing. In this, he goes substantially beyond Beethoven’s exactness in indication, not only through the strict prescriptions that he makes to the individual player regarding technique of execution, and not only through the breath marks in the phrasing, precisely indicated by him in the form of commas. Above all, he does it through the manner of his characteristics in presentation, which almost always have something poetically programmatic. The number and kind of these indications are of astounding diversity and vivid clarity. [30] Movement headings such as “Etwas täppisch und sehr derb” (“Somewhat clumsily and very coarse”) in the second movement and “Sehr trotzig” (“Very defiant”) in the third movement of the Ninth already give pregnant instructions. They are supplemented by isolated indications such as “Mit höchster Wut” (“With greatest fury”), “Wie gepeitscht” (“As if whipped”), “Heftig ausbrechend” (“Violently breaking out”), “Wie ein Kondukt” (“Like a funeral procession”), “Schwebend” (“Soaring”), “Ersterbend” (“Dying away”). Together with the notation, they awaken imaginative conceptions of an almost tangible plasticity about what is wanted, and they completely compel in the direction of the composer’s will. Mahler’s dynamics are similarly insistent. Like the entire manner of his sonic design, they also reflect the warm, piercing, flashing intensity of his feeling. Their harsh opposition, which is often apparently unmediated, is not actually the expression of an external contrast or change of mood. It is a surge of blood, a

swing of temperament, the most secret sensual life, just as his buildups or his long-lasting, steady dynamic suspensions are not intended as organic climaxes of the inner motion. They often mean the opposite of that which the habitual perception would support. The fading *pianissimo* often represents for Mahler the utmost sharpening of expression, and the *fortissimo* can mean for him an external turmoil of feelings rather than a summation and intensification.³⁹

If one recognizes the striving for intensity as the actual determining moment in Mahler's sonic design, then his harmony, rhythm, and voice leading also appear less disconcerting. The spun-out march motions, for example, that frequently dominate entire movements in Mahler, have often drawn him the accusation of rhythmic monotony. Such preference for the retention of certain, very simply defined basic rhythmic formulas becomes explicable as soon as the listener affords himself enough naïveté and willingness to empathize in order to surrender to the restless uniformity and the fantastic constancy of this motion. Mahler's harmony is also often amazingly naïve in detail. Not at all seeking after originality, it carelessly makes use of the simplest turns. Then again, it appears inextricable in its muddled interweaving of the most varied elements of sound. This opposition is no longer enigmatic if one here also does not take the musical end in itself or the desire for exceptional and bold combinations as the inducement. It is a calm enjoyment of the unfettered singing out of voices, which now run through long stretches of the same harmonic surface, then randomly cross each other, making it hardly possible to find their way harmonically. Mahler's musical conception is far less harmonically determined than that of most of his contemporaries and predecessors. The melodic and linear perception predominates.⁴⁰ Even when his polyphony, as in the fugal Finale of the Fifth Symphony, consistently moves within the boundaries of the fundamental harmonic ideas, only intersecting, expanding, or denting them, then this harmony still emerges mostly as a consequence, not as a cause of the

voices coming together. These are led, the further Mahler's development progresses, ever more independently, more freely, ever less concerned with harmonic considerations. It was not granted to Mahler to travel the path he trod here, which was initially more compulsive, then gradually more conscious, to the very end, to completely loose himself from the bonds of harmonic thinking and perception, [31] to abandon himself to only the melodic impulse of the individual voice and to understand the simultaneous sound as merely a consequence of voices crossing each other. As a harmonist, Mahler stands on the border between two worlds, just as he is, in his overall and general appearance, not so much an innovator as a finisher, a summarizer of what has gone before through the strength of a personal artistic and world view.

He once uttered a deeply characteristic statement for the fundamental nature of this view when he was questioned about the use of the cowbells in the Sixth Symphony. Most listeners, he commented, incorrectly understood this innovation. He said that it was not about the achievement of any sort of striking sound effect, but about finding a symbol in sound for the feeling of distance from the Earth, for the greatest loneliness. As such a symbol, the cowbells appeared for him—the last sound that the wanderer, ascending to the heights, hears coming from the Earth.⁴¹ This statement is instructive for Mahler's type of sound perception in general. In its symbolism lies the most important characteristic of his music. It was for him an instinctive emotional life that played not above, but rather outside of the intellectual, not representable in an intellectual way, a pure language of the subconscious swelling from the natural impulse. This language of sensuous life created symbols in the tonal language of the music, upon whose symphonic fate a purely emotional experience was manifested. As Mahler's creative power was revealed in the power of this creation of symbols, so is everything that he wrote and how he wrote it only to be understood from the symbolic meaning of his musical language. It also

explains Mahler's choice of keys, both in individual movements and in entire works, explaining, say, the turn of the Second Symphony from the C-minor opening to the grand E-flat-major conclusion, that of the Fourth Symphony from a sweet G major to a mystically transfigured E major, that of the Fifth from the gloomy C-sharp minor of the funeral march to the lusty, cheerful D major of the final Rondo, that of the Seventh from a harmonically unclear and active E minor to a festive C major, and that of the Ninth from a calm, singing D major to a sublime D-flat major. It is this symbolism that, in summation, determines the entire essence of Mahler's sound, his manner of instrumental treatment, his rhythm, harmony, dynamics, phrasing, his performance indications—in short, everything that can be perceived by the senses. The pursuit of a sonic symbolization of an emotional event is always the standard. From here, there also emerges the particular usage of the human voice. The more large-scale and powerful the image was which he envisioned, the more numerous and diverse the forces enlisted needed to be. "Imagine that the entire universe begins to ring and resound," Mahler wrote about the Eighth Symphony.⁴² For this sounding of the entire universe, the human voice with all its expressive possibilities had to be utilized, not because the mere orchestra would have been insufficient for the musician, but because the orchestral sound as such would have been inadequate for feeling and imagining the resounding universe.

The drive toward symbolism grows out of Mahler's world view. It brings Mahler to his symphonic materials, it allows him to discover the laws of the organism from the particular nature of these materials, it determines the individual ordering, [32] sequence, and construction of this organism, and it forms the sound world with all of its various manifestations. Thus, the symphony develops from the conception of the basic symphonic idea to the individual performance as a realization in sound. And as the last consequence of this development from the

general to the particular, from the whole to the detail, which is decisive for the composer, the symphonic theme is finally formed, this apparent foundation, yet in reality only the last realization, the ultimate summit in the fulfillment of the symphonic idea.

The conception of the theme not as the cornerstone, but only as the actual agent of motion for the symphonic organism, must have evolved in a composer of Mahler's kind more strongly the more meaningless for him the concept of thematic work in the traditional sense, and the clearer to him the task of thematic expansion became. Once it was the thematic core that, to some extent, contained the whole movement within itself, and ran its course like a bullet. Now it is the thematic melisma that, hardly aware of itself, only gropes on in a slow push forward and in restless starts, only gradually obtaining form through juxtaposition with other elements, without any determination, without the will to continue, merely an appearance in itself, a natural shape, an experience, an image that lines up next to other images. The Mahlerian themes from the Second Symphony on can hardly still be viewed in the usual manner of thematic understanding. Indeed motivic kernels can be found, from which the entire structure apparently grows and from which it obtains its motor force. But the usual thematic structure and periodic boundaries fall away. The themes, or what one wishes to call such, broaden to almost movement-like appearances. These structures are then intertwined with others that newly emerge and are similarly organized, such that the analytic mind, which asks about division, order, and grouping, stands clueless. Only a perpetual growing and entwining, a continuous sprouting and blooming, a ceaseless thematic Becoming can be determined, in contrast to which all attempts at division are powerless and actually untenable.⁴³ The opening movements of the Second and Third Symphonies already show this constant life of the thematic force, which even here can only be documented as an active and generative force, but not as an individual manifestation. Mahler's

manner of thematic formation only reaches its full display, however, in the large instrumental symphonies from the Fifth on; then in the Eighth and beyond it in the Ninth, it causes all memories of the former thematic division and working out to vanish. The absolute freedom of making music purely from imaginative fantasy prevails. A mighty stream, apparently flowing without restraint, pours out from inexhaustible sources. It knows no other laws than those of the natural drive from creation and the creator, of the innermost motion, only coming to an end at the self-determined goal.

That Mahler's thematic design could display this power, which exploded all the familiar rules from within, can be attributed to its origin in song melody. This is not, in its nature, bound to the developmental rules of the symphonic theme. It carries within itself the sweeping force and the ability to unfold that are inherent in every genuine lyrical inspiration. It only requires the strong [33] drive of feeling to proliferate forward out of itself, and to grow to a great stream. In the song form, this would not have been possible, and even the transcription of the song from the intimate duet with piano into orchestral language would not have been sufficient to create the bed that this powerfully lyrical creative urge required. Here emerged the inner necessity of a union between the harshest apparent opposites: song melody and symphonic composition. Each of the two brought with it what the other required: the song brought the inwardly flowing melodic force, and the symphonic organism brought the form that could be stretched out. Here, the song could put aside all the barriers of subjective life, could spare the words without necessarily completely renouncing them, and could allow the expansive forces dwelling within it to operate without hindrance.

Thus, Mahler's thematic construction is the last necessary consequence of the nature of his symphonic style. The turn away from Beethoven's urge toward abstraction, the tendency

toward natural elements that also comprehended man as a natural being, had brought the new symphonic material. From its creative penetration arose the new symphonic organism, the type of the Finale Symphony. From its concept and idea emerged the individual structure: the form, sequence, and character of the movements. In the face of this concept and idea grew the new sound world with all its manifestations of a stylistic kind: its cosmic sonic design through the union of all things that produced sound, from the blunt percussion instrument to the human voice, its rhythm, harmony, and dynamics, the art of its presentation and finally its themes—the last consequence and yet again the first precondition of the new symphonic style. The circle closes. Song and symphony flow together into one new entity. This new entity, inwardly based upon a burning intensity of feeling, externally strengthened by a powerfully summarizing creative ability, obtains its ethical foundation through the force with which here the symbolic meaning of the musical artwork is revealed.

In this power of symbolic formation, however, lies the measure of what is enduring, valid, and true in art. The captivating ethical sweep of Beethoven's art had confused and overwhelmed minds. Incapable of matching this sweep and not strong enough to take hold of new symbols themselves, the succeeding generations had allowed the external sound to grow to the significance of the end in itself of musical art. The effective treatment of the materials of sound had become the objective. The knowledge that the sound and its formation was not a subject, only an object, and that every true musical event is an event beyond the sound, only based upon its transmission, and that only in the rediscovery of the deep emotional sources could a new stream of life for musical creation be discovered—this knowledge was not present. As creative natures arose in Bruckner and Mahler that again went back to these sources of feeling, the lack of enlightenment in their contemporaries denied acknowledgment to them. They were called crude

or simplistic or banal because others did not comprehend their courage, because they could find no understanding for their profound faith in basic humanity, [34] and because they could not grasp the grandiose naïveté of such spirits.⁴⁴

But the skepticism of a jaded time is on the wane. New people and new masses are rising up, and the yearning for faith, for light, for revelation is powerful in them. The defiant, passionate, inwardly glowing, longing art of Mahler finds in them a growing response, and in the shadow of this world-encompassing art, the softer, smoother, more externally accessible music of Bruckner also gains ever more ground. In both lies the future message of the symphonic art, for where something most intimate is formed into great art, it gains power over all humanity.

NOTES

- 1 It is unclear here whether Bekker is referring to an actual statement of Schumann on this subject or to what he “said” in the music of the slow movements themselves. The slow movement of the Second Symphony in C major (Op. 61) could certainly be considered one of the most successful true post-Beethoven, pre-Bruckner Adagio movements. It is also in the third position of a four-movement work, as in Beethoven’s Ninth.
- 2 Bekker’s statement here aptly applies to the first three Brahms symphonies, but ignores the *Allegro giocoso* C-major third movement of the Fourth Symphony in E minor, which, while in duple instead of triple meter, corresponds rather closely to the model of the scherzo type. Brahms also uses the “Allegretto” intermezzo type in several chamber works, but true scherzo movements are also common in his early- and middle-period chamber works, along with the three early piano sonatas.
- 3 A more standard translation of the word “scheu” here would be “timidly” or “shyly,” but both seem somewhat strong for the point Bekker is making here.
- 4 While Bekker is vague about exactly which works of Liszt he is referring to, it is apparent that he is discussing the symphonic poems, perhaps epitomized in *Les Préludes*, which rather clearly displays the “fused” form with “Adagio and scherzo worked in episodically.” His references to the *Faust* and *Dante* symphonies a bit later seem to confirm this. This statement about the “unity of the symphonic organism” is similarly vague, but seems to refer to the one-movement construction of the symphonic poems. The later course of the discussion also confirms this. Bekker does not mention Schumann’s Fourth, which he must have known, in this context. Perhaps he perceived that, although that work’s movements follow one another without a break, they are still more distinct and independent than the sections of a Liszt symphonic poem.
- 5 Bekker’s statement here has a definite echo of the ideas in Friedrich Schiller’s influential essay “On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry” (“Über naive und sentimentale Dichtung”) from 1795, particularly one of its principal theses, that “every true genius must be naïve or it is not genius.” For Schiller, “naïve” poetry emerges from natural genius and is based on eternal principles of nature, following its laws. This is an ideal nature, a “true” nature, as distinct from “actual” nature. Bekker ascribes a similar type of idealistic genius to the “Austrian” symphonists and their compositions, not only through the use of the word “naïve,” but also through the invocation of nature as the principal source. This echo of Schiller can be traced through Bekker’s analysis of the symphonies, such as the discussion of the *Wunderhorn* poems at the end of the chapter on the Fourth Symphony (p. 387 and p. 392, note 44).
- 6 The term “speculative ethic” can be traced to post-Hegelian philosophy. Two works by such philosophers carry the same title, *System der spekulativen Ethik* (*System of Speculative Ethics*). These are Johann Ulrich Wirth, *System der spekulativen Ethik: Eine Encyclopädie der gesamten Disciplinen der praktischen Philosophie* (Heilbronn: Carl Dreschler Verlag, 1842, 2 vols.); and Heinrich Moritz Chalybäus, *System der spekulativen Ethik: oder, Philosophie der Familie, des Staates, und der religiösen Sitte* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1850, 2 vols.). Both of these writers were heavily influenced by Hegel, although Chalybäus sought to mitigate the idealistic Hegelian dialectic with more realist elements. Bekker’s use of the term in relation to Beethoven suggests a Hegelian reading of the history of the symphony and Beethoven’s role. This is confirmed by his invocation of Mahler’s symphonies as a “synthesis” at the end of this section.
- 7 As stated above, nature as the source of inspiration is a primary thread in Schiller’s “On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry.” Schiller himself credits Immanuel Kant in this context, citing the first part of *Critique of Judgment* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*), “Critique of Aesthetic Judgment” (“Lehre vom ästhetischen Urteil”), which had appeared five years earlier than Schiller’s essay.

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- 8 The ideas of Schiller and Kant continue to resonate here. This idea of originality and refusal to imitate recalls Kant's ideas of intellectual autonomy outlined in his 1784 essay "Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?" ("Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?").
- 9 Bekker presumably includes Wagner and Berlioz in the "Liszt school." Franz Brendel, editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, introduced the term "New German School" in 1859 and included both composers.
- 10 The idea of symphonic "Becoming" is a thread throughout Bekker's commentary on the symphonies, most notably in the discussion of the Third (see, for example, pp. 259-61). Bekker frequently capitalizes the word "Werden" ("Becoming"), signifying its use as a noun. In this translation, I capitalize the word "becoming" in certain instances where it is particularly appropriate. In others, I leave it without an initial capital according to my judgment. Here, where it is paired with the word "growing" ("Wachsen"), it does not seem warranted, for example.
- 11 The entire passage from "The first movements of the 'Eroica,' the 'Pastorale,' and the Ninth . . ." is quoted by Theodor Adorno in a discussion of similar concepts. Adorno introduces the Bekker quotation with his own interpretation of the idea: "Beethoven's mightiest symphonic movements pronounce a celebratory 'That is it' in repeating what has already existed in any case, present what is merely a regained identity as the Other, assert it as significant. The classical Beethoven glorifies what is because it cannot be other than it is by demonstrating its irresistibility" (Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], p. 63). The Bekker quotation follows on p. 64.
- 12 Bekker's distancing of the Austrian composers from the "organicist" models of analysis favored by Heinrich Schenker is notable. The animosity between Bekker and Schenker is well-documented, and neither man had any sympathy for the other's critical approach. Much of the mutual disrespect stemmed from Schenker's criticisms of Bekker's espousal of hermeneutics and Bekker's attacks on Schenker (which the latter saw as retaliatory) in his capacity as music critic of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* between 1911 and 1925. These barbs were typically in connection with the writings of both men on Beethoven. Universal Edition and its director Emil Hertzka were caught in the middle of the antipathy between the two men. A comprehensive account of the Schenker/Bekker disputes, with links to relevant documents from Schenker's side in both German and English, can be found at <http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org/profiles/person/entity-000057.html> (accessed March 5, 2012). Bekker does not mention Schenker by name here or elsewhere in the book.
- 13 The organic metaphors and language used by Bekker here and elsewhere, often using terms such as "germinating" and "becoming," bring to mind Goethe's concept of the "Urpflanz," or "archetypal plant." Bekker makes reference to Goethe on several occasions throughout the book, not only in connection with the Eighth Symphony. Goethe is of course closely associated with some of Schubert's most familiar song compositions, which makes these allusions in the context of the "Austrian" symphonists even more striking.
- 14 The most relevant example of this in Mahler is the opening of the Third Symphony.
- 15 After indirectly invoking Goethe, Bekker here seems to be doing the same for another figure closely associated with Mahler, Friedrich Nietzsche, particularly *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (*Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, 1872), whose title is distinctly reflected in the structure of this sentence.
- 16 This type of "introduction" appears to be modeled on that of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth, to which Bruckner's openings, including that of the Fourth Symphony, are often compared.
- 17 Adorno also quotes this entire passage beginning with "From the theme as such . . ." The quotation and the

subsequent material of this paragraph is extremely similar to and influential for Adorno's own approach, but Adorno seeks to reach beyond his predecessor. He follows the quotation thus: "However, Bekker underestimates the extent to which Mahler mobilized the constructive forces of the system, however much he may have been perplexed by them. In the productive conflict of the contradictory elements his art flourishes. That is why it is so foolish to patronize him as a composer caught between the ages" (*Mahler*, p. 65). Because Bekker is discussing Bruckner, not Mahler, in the passage quoted by Adorno, this comment is at least somewhat disingenuous.

- 18 In a discussion of the Finale of the (Mahler) Ninth Symphony, Christopher Orlo Lewis takes issue with Bekker here. After quoting and paraphrasing Bekker's views on why Bruckner's finale movements are unsuccessful, he states that "Bekker misrepresents Bruckner in several respects," claiming that Bekker's grouping of German symphonists is artificial and that both Bruckner and Mahler owe much to Schumann and Brahms. Making the point that Bruckner only placed the Adagio in third position in his last two symphonies, he then goes on to say that "Bekker seems to underestimate the dramatic value of these powerful third movement dances," which is contradicted by Bekker's statement, immediately following the passage quoted by Lewis, that Bruckner's scherzo movements are "mighty demonstrations of strength." The strongest points made by Lewis are that the Bruckner finale "always makes some tonal point" and that in the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, "the Finale is not nearly so rhapsodic and unconscious of its goal as Bekker suggests." See Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony* (Studies in Musicology: No. 79; Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1984), p. 102. For further discussion of Bekker's critical stance toward Bruckner and of his intellectual relationship with his contemporaries, the Bruckner scholars August Halm and Ernst Kurth, see my introduction, pp. 4-5 and 8-9.
- 19 Yet another echo of the ideas in Schiller's "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry." See note 5 above.
- 20 While this is a provocative statement, it should be noted that Bekker was Jewish.
- 21 Bekker's concept of the "Finale Symphony" is not without problems. Constantin Floros called it an "extreme thesis" and said that it "does not do justice to all symphonic works of the master" (*Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1992], p. 67). The idea is, however, the basis for Bekker's analysis of all the symphonies, and for him it is the principal reason for including *Das Lied von der Erde* among the symphonic works rather than regarding it as a mere song cycle. The abstract and metaphorical characterizations in the preceding paragraph become more convincing in the course of Bekker's analyses.
- 22 Bekker's unusual language here appears to be a financial metaphor. The "supplements" to the "principal sum" of the first movement could also be read as "interest" or "dividends" in this sense.
- 23 The concepts here display a similarity to Arnold Schoenberg's "Grundgestalt," where all musical events in a piece are connected to and dependent upon the totality of the work, including motivic, harmonic, rhythmic, and textual information. The "individual personality" described by Bekker is potentially synonymous with the "Grundgestalt." This type of terminology, however, would have been unusual in Bekker's hermeneutic approach to analysis.
- 24 Bekker's logic here raises several problems. By relegating the first three movements of the Sixth Symphony to the status of "preludes," he avoids the problem of the order of the inner movements, which would have ramifications for the symphony moving "directly upward in a straight line." The argument, however, becomes clearer and more justified in his analysis of each respective work. Bekker will later say that the Finale of the First Symphony almost bursts the boundaries of form that are imposed upon it, which may explain the assertion

that the movement received its due significance “externally, but not yet internally.” More problematic is the exclusion of the Second Symphony from this group of works, but since Bekker will later describe that symphony’s Finale as a “piecemeal” structure (including its external connections to the third and fourth movements), his reluctance to view it as the goal of a “two-part construction” is understandable. Indeed, Bekker’s analysis of the Second is curiously weighted toward the first movement, which he was apparently reluctant to assign the status of a “prelude,” as he does with the first movements of the Sixth and the Eighth. The reasons for this become apparent in the discussion of the next group of symphonies, in which the Second is included.

- 25 In Donald Mitchell’s thoughtful article on the Fourth Symphony, “‘Swallowing the Programme’: Mahler’s Fourth Symphony” in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 187-216, the author adds a more sophisticated dimension to the symphony’s “unpretentious,” “simple,” and “unproblematic” aspects, in short, those associated with the work’s “childlike” or “innocent” character. He analyzes the symphony as a journey from “Experience” to “Innocence.” See also the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 325-26, along with note 5 for that chapter, p. 389. Bekker’s “lightly programmatic echo” is interesting in light of Mitchell’s title. The program is “swallowed” in that the moment of revelation for its source is postponed until the Finale. Bekker’s own analysis of the Fourth actually comes close to that conclusion.
- 26 These assertions are also debatable. Despite the actual content and the fact that it takes up far fewer pages of the score, the Finale of the Ninth typically lasts much longer than the middle movements in terms of performance time. Its status as a “goal” is a principal point in Lewis’s argument about the “tonal plot” of the symphony. See *Tonal Coherence*, pp. 105-6.
- 27 There is an obvious comparison to Schubert here, but in an inverted way. Schubert is often considered a song composer who wrote symphonies, while Mahler would be more likely judged as a symphonic composer who wrote songs. The cross-pollination between song and symphony in Mahler finds its Schubertian counterpart in works such as the “Wanderer” Fantasy, D. 760, the “Trout” Quintet, D. 667, and the “Death and the Maiden” String Quartet, D. 810, for which Mahler drafted an arrangement for string orchestra.
- 28 Adorno quotes much of this extremely important paragraph, from the second sentence to this point, in connection with his observations about Mahler and his divergence from “subjective lyric.” See *Mahler*, pp. 74-75.
- 29 Compare this passage to the closing section of the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 385-88.
- 30 The “layers of distorting educated intellect” are similar to the “intellectual guidance” that constitutes a self-imposed immaturity and a lack of intellectual autonomy in Kant’s “What is Enlightenment?”
- 31 This highly provocative idea is echoed by Adorno, who says that “Mahler cannot be reconciled with the notion of standard competence.” He makes reference to Debussy walking out of the Paris premiere of the Second Symphony, stating that to him, “it may have sounded as Henri Rousseau’s paintings looked among the impressionists in the Jeu de Paume” (*Mahler*, pp. 19-20). Rousseau’s works have been described as “post-Impressionist” and are frequently described as deliberately “naïve” or “primitive.”
- 32 This is an important perception. Bekker himself fails to recognize sonata form in the first movement of the Ninth Symphony, while later writers frequently analyze the movement as such. The most extreme case is that of the Finale of the Sixth Symphony. Robert Samuels compared several diverging analyses of the movement in some sort of sonata form, including Bekker’s, and none of them match in the designations of boundaries and sections, particularly the “line” between the exposition and the development. See Samuels, *Mahler’s Sixth*

Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 72-75. It is certainly significant that Bekker himself recognized the problematic nature of Mahler's sonata forms.

33 This word will remain untranslated and capitalized throughout the translation.

34 While Bekker's primary point here is interesting—particularly the lesson from Bruckner about the “dangerous power of the Adagio”—the summary is arguably too dismissive of the expressive powers in certain slow movements, particularly those of the Fourth and the Sixth. The one in the Fourth is in fact marked “Poco Adagio,” so assigning it to the Andante type is problematic. That of the Sixth is an Andante, but it can be argued that it carries as much emotional weight as the Adagietto of the Fifth, which also has a “songlike” character but is assigned to the Adagio type, albeit with a qualification.

35 The Eighth.

36 Bekker presumably means that the 19th century was not primarily known as a great age of choral music, and that the most familiar pieces of such music are written with full orchestra, treating the voices in largely the same manner as the instruments. He seems to be contrasting this age with the greatest times and realms of vocal music, such as the German baroque, the age of Bach.

37 As compared to the “inner necessity of [Mahler's] use of the human voice within the symphony.”

38 Adorno quotes the paragraph to this point. While Bekker's assertion here about “hardness and ruthlessness in the treatment of color” is indeed provocative, Adorno takes this provocative language even further. He prefaces the Bekker quotation with the following remarkable statements: “Nowhere is Mahler's music inspired primarily by a sense for sound. In this he was, initially, rather inept. The lack of expertise is remarkable in a conductor of his experience. At first he was seldom able to achieve the glowing orchestral tutti that even the most minor representatives of the New German School copied from Wagner, insofar as he ever aimed at it.” Following the Bekker quotation, however, Adorno continues: “But instrumentation in Mahler, which, by the criteria of Wagner or Schreker, appears dry or incorporeal, suits its purpose not through asceticism but as a true portrayal of the composition, and to that extent is decades ahead of its time. Here too virtue and necessity collaborate” (*Mahler*, p. 116).

39 On the subject of Mahler's performance indications, Adorno makes the following observation: “The expression marks, like many peculiarities of the instrumentation in the mature works, are protective measures against the performers . . . Mahler attempted to achieve a foolproof composition. His wisdom . . . is confirmed by the fact that the very mistakes he tried to prevent occur again and again; for example, eminent conductors invariably speed up where the score warns against it. Concern for correct reproduction became a canon of the composition. To compose music in such a way that the performance cannot destroy it, and so virtually to abolish performance, means to compose with absolute clarity and unambiguity” (*Mahler*, p. 108). Regarding dynamics and orchestration, he states, in connection to the Sixth Symphony in particular, that “its frequently paradoxical combinations of forte and piano in different instruments and groups create a sound that is as it is through preventing what would result from more conventional composition or directions” (p. 116).

40 Adorno makes a similar point: “Only where other elements, like melody and metrics, become specific do they enrich harmony with dissonant arpeggios and degrees” (*Mahler*, p. 109).

41 See note 5 in the chapter on the Sixth Symphony, p. 536.

42 In a letter to Willem Mengelberg. See *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, edited and revised by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and

Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), p. 312 (Letter 360).

- 43 These ideas evoke Schoenberg and his concept of “developing variation.” David B. Greene adds another interesting layer to Bekker’s words here: “Bekker does not seem to notice that Mahler explicitly alludes to periodic grouping at the same time that he makes periodic grouping, in the end, untenable. Consequently, Bekker misses the possibility that Mahler’s phrase structure may evoke the common-sense concept of consciousness in order to reject it and replace it with a different understanding of consciousness.” See Greene, *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), p. 32.
- 44 Again, at the end of the chapter, Bekker arrives at Schiller’s idea of “naive genius.”

[35]

THE PRELUDE:
FIRST SYMPHONY

[36 blank]

[37] **Mahler** did not begin as a symphonist. Chamber music, songs, and operas were his first attempts at creation. He later destroyed most of them himself. Is there a cause to deplore this strict judgment? The internally unfinished offers in itself a singular historical interest. Regarding personality, it can only be considered as a preparation. Out of the variety of genres to which Mahler turned at the beginning speaks the searching and grasping of immaturity, the uncertainty regarding his own calling, the imitative drive of one who is still becoming. But this vacillation only lasts a short while. To the measure in which scholastic learning drops off, chamber music and opera are set aside. Songs come forth in greater numbers, a choral work with orchestra, *Das klagende Lied*, leads in the decisive direction, and with the First Symphony the way is found. This symphony, sketched in 1885 and completed in 1888,¹ is perhaps a debut but not an apprentice work. It shows the personality of the 28-year-old in a clear expression of all its intrinsic features. A mediating assessment of this work is impossible. There remains only the choice between approval and rejection.

The special characteristics are not in external signs of a revolutionary attitude. The orchestration is usual for large symphonic works of recent times, triple and quadruple woodwind divisions, four trumpets, trombones, tuba and full percussion. Seven horns are required, to which Mahler asks for reinforcement at the end, so that the “hymn-like chorale that sounds above everything can achieve the necessary fullness of sound” (damit der “hymnenartige, alles übertönende Choral die nötige Klangfülle erreicht”). In addition, the horn players should stand up here “in order to achieve the greatest possible power of sound” (“um die möglichst größte Schallkraft zu erzielen”). These, as well as the direction that appears in another place: “Woodwinds: bells in the air” (“Holzinstrumente: Schalltrichter in die Höhe”), are striking

instructions, yet they are only of a kind regarding technical execution. They do indeed hint at the monumental direction of the Mahlerian perception of sound, but they cannot, in the context of the whole, be judged as key indicators of a special character. The structural layout also has little external difference from the familiar one. The symphony is in four movements, and the order corresponds to the well-known scheme: a lively first movement, “Sehr gemächlich” (“very leisurely”), opened by a slow introduction, a “Kräftig bewegt” (“vigorously moving”) in $\frac{3}{4}$ time with a trio, a “Feierlich und gemessen” (“solemn and measured”), and the Finale. The extent of the opening movements, which have a simple structure, is nothing striking, and is even, in comparison to other ambitious symphonies of different origins, of a concise dimension. Only the richly structured Finale appears more externally weighty. It fills almost half of the score, and even if this spatial extent, because of the mostly fast tempo, does not completely correspond to the duration, the movement is at any rate also the most demanding for the listener.

This Finale is striking. The novelty, however, lies not only in the structural dimensions. It also lies in the turning away from a poetically and conceptually determined music of illusion, in the return to the original symbolism of the musical language, and in the deployment and unconditional development of pregnant [38] sound symbols, out of which is formed a new emotional world of sonic ideas.

In the introduction, a motive appears that is continually assigned to the clarinet and here carries the instruction to “imitate the call of a cuckoo” (“der Ruf eines Kuckucks nachzuahmen”):



[Example 1-1: clarinet, m. 30]

The call of a cuckoo generally moves in the interval of a major third, and the most well-known use of it within the symphonic literature, in Beethoven's "Pastorale," also indicates it in this orientation. Mahler chooses the fourth and thereby distances himself from reality. He thus does not imitate the call of a cuckoo—he symbolizes it in that he only retains the characteristic rhythm but changes the melodic sequence. This change is not arbitrary. The motive of a fourth that here symbolizes the cuckoo call already appears in the beginning of the introduction in another rhythmic ordering, as a sequence of downward sinking half notes. It carries the description "like a sound of nature" ("wie ein Naturlaut").



[Example 1-2: descending fourth (flutes, m. 5?)]

The melodic sequence of downward directed perfect fourths is thus for Mahler the symbol for a sound of nature, the sonic translation of the natural voice *per se*. The cuckoo call is to him only a rhythmically individualized statement of the same natural voice which, at the cost of realism, remains melodically unchanged. It is not important that the cuckoo calls, but rather that nature calls in changing rhythmic shapes.

Does a programmatic hint perhaps lie in the direction "like a sound of nature" at the first

appearance of the fourth motive? Those who impartially hear it will answer the question in the negative. The natural elements in the sonic effect of the perfect fourth, unadulterated and harmonically indeterminate, are so absolutely clarified through the uniformly floating rhythm, the mysteriousness of the orchestral garb, and the tender dynamics, that this note of Mahler's is superfluous to the hearer and is only to be considered as a performance indication for the players. The motive of a fourth is given without conceptual awareness as a symbol of that which is untouched in nature, as a musical utterance of that which is speechless in reality. It has this effect because the power of impression in the motive of a fourth is here comprehended in its elemental meaning. The pure interval becomes the symbol of a pure nature. One can label it simply as a "motive of nature." As a sonic phenomenon, it embodies nature becoming a musical sound.

The fourth motive does not only govern the beginning of the first movement. Out of it are generated a whole group of related themes and motives of the first, second, and third movements that shoot around the sound of nature in ever new formations. First is the introductory theme in its complete shape: the striding fourth, beginning three times, sinking down from the fifth, A, to the root, D, of the D-minor chord, the nature motive extended to a nature theme in a tenderly floating minor character:



[Example 1-3: oboe (doubled by bassoons), mm. 7-9]

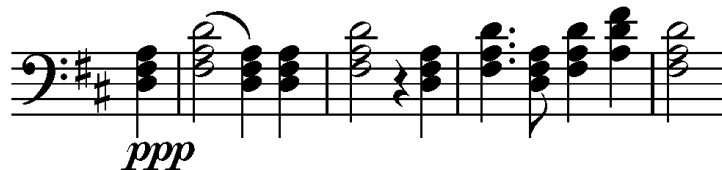
The second appearance is the cuckoo call of the clarinet. Out of it develops the third, the "very

leisurely” (“sehr gemächlich”) striding main theme of the first movement:



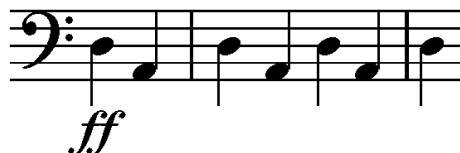
[Example 1-4: presumably cellos, mm. 62-64]

Here the fourth motive only provides the beginning, which then continues in diatonic [39] major-key steps. In opposition to this, it appears during the course of the movement in a pure chordal continuation, thematically spun out and rounded off:



[Example 1-5: horns, mm. 208-212]

And in powerfully resounding thumps of the timpani it closes the first movement:



[Example 1-6: timpani, mm. 448-450]

In crude rhythms, it initiates the second movement:



[Example 1-7: cellos and basses, mm. 1-3],

and also returns again in the dance theme that is laid above this:



[Example 1-8: winds, melodic line, mm. 8-14]

Taken back all the way to the original primitive version, it leads into the funeral march-like third movement with quiet, continually sounding timpani beats in the nature of a *basso ostinato*, and likewise brings it to a close:



[Example 1-9: timpani, mm. 1-2]

It then appears varied as a countermelody to the canonic theme:



[Example 1-10: oboe, mm. 19-20]

In the original version as a nature theme, it newly sounds several times in the course of the Finale, and here it also experiences the crowning transformation to major and to a hymn-like chorale:



[Example 1-11: horns, mm. 652-656 (or similar passages)]

These are not episodic details or coincidental relationships. Here are shown the beginning, the main points, and the conclusion of a large organic Becoming. Everything that comes to pass in this symphony is the transformation of the nature theme from the mysterious minor of its initial appearance to the triumphant major of the concluding apotheosis. The path to this leads over a strong, muscular Ländler² and over the funeral-march rhythm of the third movement. The nature motive always provides the beginning, the goal, and the important directional points.

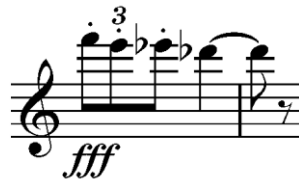
This is a new type of sonic-symbolic formation, as far removed from coincidence as from programmatic intention.³ Equating it with a sort of “*idée fixe*” would be to misunderstand the peculiarity of this type of design. The effect does not rest upon a preconceived arrangement with the listener, but it rests upon the strength of impression in the sonic phenomenon. The question of the level of consciousness in the application of these resources is irrelevant. The decisive factor is that the symphony is pervaded and governed in the most important sections by a group of motives whose complete formations have their origins in the interval of the falling fourth. According to the manner of its composition, one can call it a chordal motive.

In opposition to them stand the chromatic motives. There are two that have significance for the course of the symphony: the first is the slow bass motive that thrusts upward from the depths in the introduction:



[Example 1-12: cellos and basses, top lines, mm. 47-49]

It now brings about the rhythmic solidification of the nature theme, and like that, it becomes significant for the further course of the first movement and the Finale. The second chromatic motive first appears in the Finale:



[Example 1-13: piccolo, flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 8-9]⁴

It is the opposite of the first one: hard and thrust out where that is gently slurred, crashing down from above where that climbs from below, belted out in stormy triplet motion and triple *forte* [40] from the winds where that achieves its coloristic character through the creeping quarter-note motion of the soft string basses. The chromatic principle is represented in these two motives by two opposites that supplement each other and are thus exhausted, as it were.

Both groups, the chordal and the chromatic motives, are polar contrasts. The nature motive appears purely as harmonic space. Cut through by no individualized line, periodically unbounded, it perhaps obtains in its thematic extensions a rhythmic and chordal consolidation, but no melodic shape. It lacks the linear impulse. On the other hand, this is so strong in the chromatic motives that it leaves no possibility for other energies to unfold and remains restricted to its original statement that was only organized by rhythm. Both groups of motives, the chordal

and the chromatic, are of an elemental character, so to speak, the one purely spatial and harmonic, and the other of a purely linear motion, but both are without the capability of achieving from their own powers a rounding to a melodically individualized harmonic fullness.

Their union brings about a third group: that of the diatonic themes. These lack the characteristic common to both others: the invariability of the primary elemental feature, the explicitness of the symbolic value. They are both chordally as well as chromatically constituted. Their presence is based precisely therein, that they prove to be amenable to such changing combinations. The way in which this happens determines the course of the symphonic narrative. If the chordal motives denote both the beginning and the endpoint of the whole work, the chromatic ones appear as the unsettled, forward-striving element, so it is the diatonic motives that are impacted by the opposing forces. In their appearances and changes, the events of the work are thus carried out. They are the material: the players, where both of the others signify the awakening and driving forces.

From such symbolism of the symphonic action in Mahler, the baselines of his thematic formation emerge in details as well as in the complete symphonic construction. It is not a play with arbitrarily assigned roles. The meaning of the various motivic symbols emerges only from the character of their sonic appearance. That Mahler again recognized the symbolic strength of such fundamental motives, and that he pulled them forward in their bare natural state and made them into the foundation of his creation is the most significant novelty in his art. He demonstrates through this a sense of the original sonic phenomenon of music that had become lost to his time, yet which alone could provide the basis for a symphonic output that is perceived as truly monumental. In that Mahler again climbs down into the primeval world of musical

sound phenomena, evoking these in their unadulterated, natural force of meaning, he also arrives at results of a poetic character. They are only consequences, however, not conditions of the musical events. The poetic idea as a driving or leading force is not present with Mahler, although [41] the course of the work results in a poetic whole.⁵ It would therefore be inappropriate, based upon the appearances of the nature motive, to describe the First Symphony as a “Nature” or “Forest” Symphony or something similar. It is likewise superfluous to develop a definite program out of the changes in the motives, their contrast, and their mutual influence, although the incorporation of individual melodies from the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* could suggest an interpretation of such kind. It is the life of the sound in itself which is here laid bare to its roots, and whose original harmonic and rhythmic strengths, with all their expressive possibilities, are again brought into the sound. Mahler himself did give belated poetic headings to individual movements of the First and later symphonies. One can apply them, inasmuch as they are understood in the descriptive sense as poetic consequences of a musical event. But only the knowledge of this event itself, the sound symbols upon which it is based, the tonal appearances that develop within it and out of whose continual working the musical organism grows, leads also to the knowledge of the poetically imagined world to which the whole belongs.

So considered, the introduction to the first movement is shown to be a pedal point on A, laid out to the highly unusual extent of 62 measures. In common time, “slowly, dragging” (“*langsam, schleppend*”), this A sounds at first most delicately in the string orchestra, divided into nine parts, in curiously unreal tones. Over the deep A from one part of the contrabasses, according to Mahler’s direction to be played “very distinctly, although *pianissimo*” (“*sehr deutlich, wenngleich pianissimo*”), the remaining contrabasses, cellos, violas, and violins lie in

atmospheric harmonics. Only in the third measure is a melodic stirring released from the spectral, shimmering sound vision: the motive of a fourth appears in the piccolo, oboe, and clarinets, sinking down from A to E and then again disappearing. It sounds a second time two measures later, this time an octave lower in the dark coloration of flute, English horn, and bass clarinet. Again it is submerged back into the unison A, and only with the third appearance does it obtain a thematic contour through threefold repetition on the degrees of the downward sinking D-minor chord:



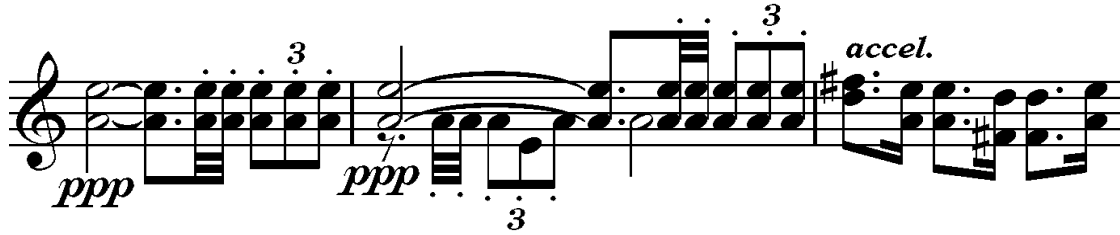
[Example 1-14: oboe (doubled in lower octaves by bassoons), mm. 7-9, as above]

It does not lead, though, to the expected A an octave lower, but remains sitting on B-flat. A new counter-motive is heard, in fanfare-like, lively eighth-note chordal triplets, climbing from the depths in the clarinets:



[Example 1-15: clarinets, mm. 9-10]

The clarinets here provide a preliminary hint at the trumpets that are positioned “very far away” (“in sehr weiter Entfernung”), who answer with a new fanfare:



[Example 1-16: trumpets in the distance, mm. 22-24]

Under the enlivening influence of the fanfares, the fourth motive, which until now has floated disembodied in even half notes, also bestirs into its own rhythmic pulsation with a sudden start:



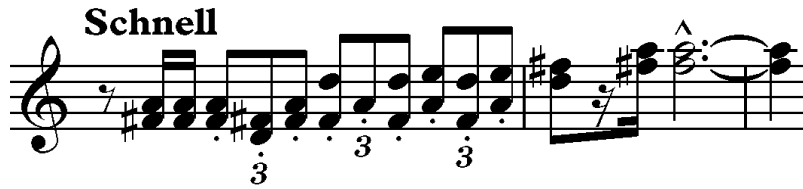
[Example 1-17: oboe, mm. 25-26]

The cuckoo call sounds out and repeats itself urgently, and then into it enters the sound, “very softly sung” (“sehr weich gesungen”), of the horn melody:



[Example 1-18: horns, mm. 32-34]

It is answered with sudden acceleration by a third [42] fanfare “in the distance” (“in weiter Entfernung”):



[Example 1-19: trumpets in the distance, mm. 36-38]

It thrusts cheekily up to the high A in a sharp, almost painfully biting contrast to the A of the pedal point, which belongs to a completely different, unearthly sphere. This flares up in several intense *pizzicato* strokes while flutes and oboes slide down into the dissonant diminished-seventh chords on F-sharp and C-sharp until they again relent to the “soft and expressive” (“weich und ausdrucksvoll”) horn melody:



[Example 1-20: horns, mm. 39-41]

For the fourth time, trumpet fanfares are heard at the same time as the cuckoo call.



[Example 1-21: trumpets in the distance, mm. 44-45]

Now the spell of the secretive calm finally appears to be broken. The higher octaves of the pedal point have already gradually disappeared during the preceding fanfares. Only the basses still

continue to lie, and they are now joined by the timpani in a softly pulsating roll. In the low strings, however, the chromatic bass motive begins to move forward and push upward:



[Example 1-22: cellos and basses, top lines, mm. 47-49, as above]

Unceasingly driving to the heights, it appears to direct itself against the fourth motive, which lowers itself against it in accelerated motion, as if to repel it and suppress it. And after the bass motive has risen through two octaves, it again sinks quietly and quickly back into the darkness. The fourth motive has asserted itself, but it has become something different. The chromatic impetus to motion has informed it. It has been torn out of the dim calmness of the beginning and become a firmly throbbing quarter-note rhythm, it has arrived from the expectant dominant orientation, A–E, to complete tonal closure on the tonic, D–A , and it has mixed its purely harmonic original form with diatonic stepwise motion: it has become a melodic and periodically rounded theme which, coming out of its embryo of a fourth, strides upward, “always very leisurely” (“immer sehr gemächlich”), tenderly singing, but still determined and with clearly pronounced individual character:

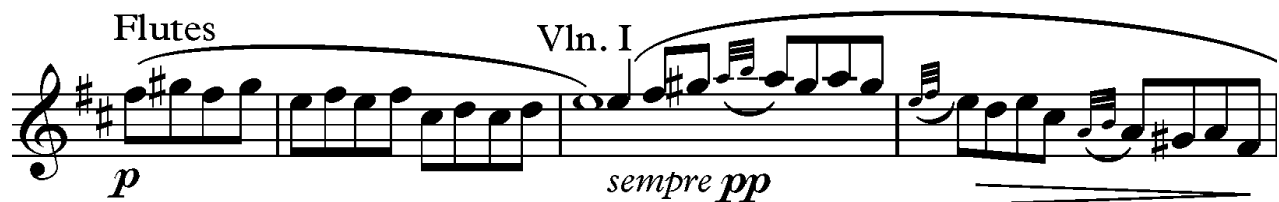


[Example 1-23: cellos, mm. 62-71]

The events of this introduction can be summarized as the nature motive taking shape. That is the path from its beginning to its conclusion. There the original motive, delicately glowing out of an atmospheric shimmer of sound—here its lively completed form, fulfilled with the energy of action. In between are the awakening calls of the fanfares, unceasingly calling out of the distance to wake the life that is emerging, the mellow horn melodies, which are fantasizing presentiments and inviting promises of a future melodic presence, and last of all the bass wave that presses itself from below against the nature motive. The birth of the theme is carried out by an intangible vision climbing down into the world of appearances. The relationship of the structure with the introduction to Beethoven's Fourth stands out without lessening Mahler's independence. The events in the two introductions are fundamentally different. In Beethoven, it is the gradual brightening and expulsion of an atmosphere pervaded by heavy, dark tensions, and in Mahler it is [43] the gradual accumulation of a pure appearance of light, bright as crystal, into a more and more tangible embodiment.

The first theme releases the energy that has been drawn together and dammed up in the introduction. It now pours forth, commencing in a gentle stream, growing continually broader

over the entire exposition. In an unceasing sequence, new shapes unfold; one grows from the other without interrupting the consistency of the line, leading it up on the contrary to an intensification of the greatest organic strength that is carried by a purely melodic impulse of motion. The initially very tenderly intoned bass theme, imitated canonically by the bassoon, ends with a thoughtful pause, into which the cuckoo call sounds. The trumpet takes it over, still *pianissimo*, and then passes it to the violins. The flute and the violins that follow it spin the quarter-note motion further into a delicately woven eighth-note pattern:



[Example 1-24: flute, mm. 78-80; first violins, mm. 80-81]⁶

New melodic formations join in, such as the languid violin theme:



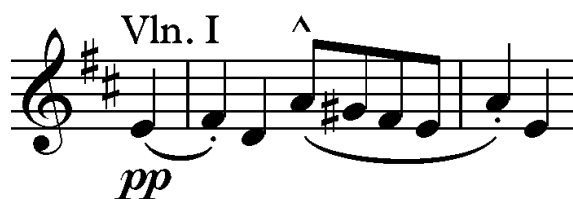
[Example 1-25: first violins, mm. 84-87; cellos, mm. 84-85]

Then the wind motive that sounds like the trilling of a bird call:



[Example 1-26: flute, mm. 94-95; first violins, mm. 96-98]

The motion becomes livelier, and into the *legato* that has been favored to this point are mingled hopping *staccato* motives:



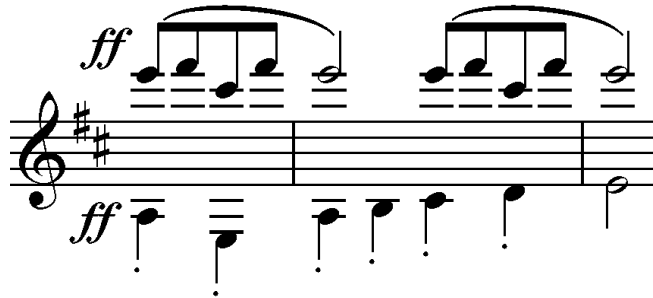
[Example 1-27: first violins, mm. 120-122]

and skipping *spiccati*:



[Example 1-28: first violins, mm. 128-130]

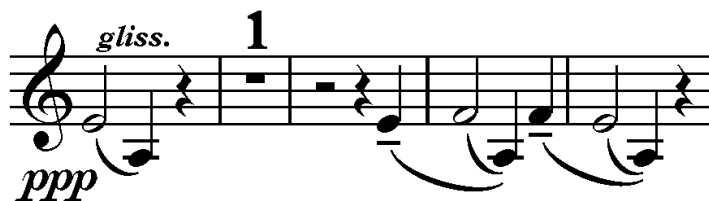
At the A-major *forte*, together with the main theme intoned by the horns, the bird call rings out in a new shape:



[Example 1-29: flutes, two oboes, first clarinet, E-flat clarinet, horns, mm. 135-137]

The *crescendo* swells ever more strongly and the tempo speeds up until the climax is reached with a triple *forte*. The gleaming A major fades quickly away and loses itself in the unison A of the violins and violas. The cuckoo call, expanding to an octave, enters quietly, and once again the picture of the melodic stream, broadening to serene strength, passes over.

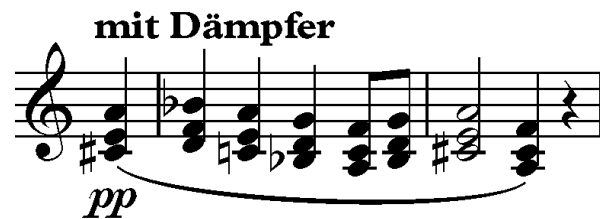
With this twofold unfurling, the melodic strength of motion is exhausted for now. As in the introduction, the high A stretches out in string harmonic tones. The lively tempo is halted, becoming twice as slow and moving to that of the introduction as the bird trill motive and the cuckoo call are sounded in isolation from solo woodwinds. But now a cello voice answers like a sigh:



[Example 1-30: cellos, mm. 167-171]

The major mood sinks to minor, and the pedal point falls from A to F. Called by the recitative-like, lamenting cello voice, the two elemental motives appear again: the fourth and the

chromatic, layered upon each other. A horn melody, this time in minor, enters muted, similarly as in the introduction:



[Example 1-31: muted horns, mm. 192-194]

As the flutes repeat the last melancholy phrase of the horn melody, a new theme sounds in the harp: [44]



[Example 1-32: harp, mm. 195-196]

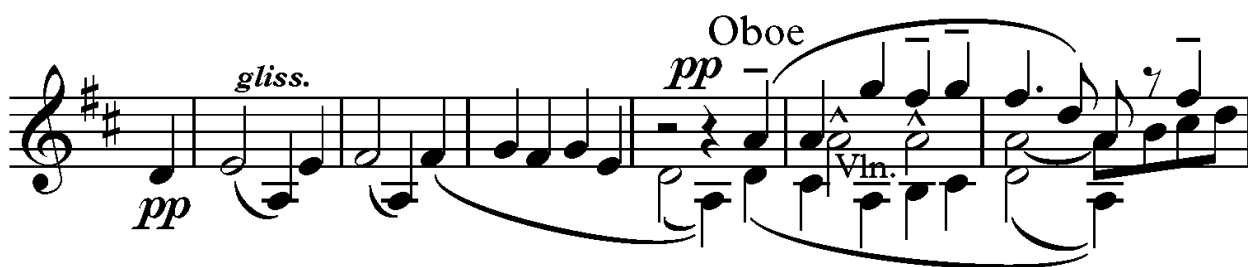
It is, in a certain sense, the counterpart to the main theme in D major. As that is the enlivening of the nature motive, so can the step motive of the harp be described as the descendant of the chromatic motive. The major-key theme, which does not find in itself the strength to continue further, sinks back into the darkness of the elemental motives, and attempts to animate these through the lamenting cello calls. But the darkness does not lighten as before, the chromatic motive initially shows itself to be mightier than the nature motive, and it now forms a new countersubject. The lamenting voice sounds further, the cuckoo call answers like a promise, the gloomy D minor is transformed in long-held harmonies into an intense secondary dominant chord on B-flat, then this changes quietly into the augmented sixth chord⁷ on E-flat, and out of

the harmonic darkness, a suddenly bright D major flares up again. Through the sound of the trombones, playing here for the first time, it is a mood that also leads into the mystical, overcoming, as if by an otherworldly power, of the dark forces that have just begun to newly unfold. This mystical mood also remains for the first twelve measures in the newly won D major: violin *tremolos* in the highest register, and under these the new appearance of the nature motive as a periodically rounded horn melody:



[Example 1-33: horns, mm. 208-212, as above]

It is only a vision that does not emerge from the triple *piano* of its distant appearance. Yet the first crisis has been overcome, and the breakthrough of the melodic force has succeeded. Under the exultant bird trill motive in the flute, the formerly lamenting cello voice now sounds in a peaceful, happy song:



[Example 1-34: cellos, mm. 220-226; first violins, mm. 225-226; oboe, mm. 224-226]

The melodies of the exposition find themselves again, moving in richer modulations, and decorated with new contrapuntal voices. The song theme first intoned by the cellos mingles

itself with the earlier themes in a broad unfolding. The harmonic motion, which in the exposition had only included the nearest neighbor keys to D and A major, spreads itself in an abundant jubilation of sound toward D-flat, A-flat, C, and F, a life in sound that blooms ever more lavishly, both thematically and harmonically, and always retaining the major-key mood. However, the naïve streaming of melodic energy is lost. The dynamic line does not now strive upward in a straight direction. It plays in changing colors and holds itself thereby within gentler contrasts. Trombones exit completely, the trumpet is used only at the beginning in a soloistic appearance and then is likewise silent, and the horns are used either in a pair or a group of four, primarily for tender effects that fill the harmonies. The thematic direction is left to the strings and woodwinds; they and the pedal tones of the harp determine the transparent but, due to the absence of all the strong instruments, somewhat pale coloration of this section, which seems overshadowed by pressure from within. The opposing elements have not yet been delivered, and the disturbance is only pushed aside under the liberating aftereffect of the D-major vision. There suddenly follows, *pianissimo* in the violins, a turn of the song theme to F minor:



[Example 1-35: second violins, mm. 304-306]

[45] Reiterated by the basses, it immediately calls the threatening step motive onto the scene:



[Example 1-36: clarinets, bassoons, cellos, basses, mm. 306-308]

This time it asserts itself as a countersubject to the song theme. It broadens its opening notes and thereby obtains increasing strength:



[Example 1-37: flutes, oboes, clarinets (with some second violin doubling), mm. 310-316]

Violent and trenchant escalations as well as lamenting buildups that swell and recede reach their high point in the long-sounding G-flat of the violins, whose dissonant effect is strengthened even more by the groaning horns:



[Example 1-38: violins, horns, mm. 321-322]

Even the fanfare motive of the introduction, now begun by muted trumpets in D-flat major,

fortissimo, brings no help. The darkening theme marches further with increasing strength, and with the entrance of the trombones along with long-held horn and trumpet harmonies, the colors darken more and more. Here the theme inverts itself into a contrary motion:



[Example 1-39: one-measure motive first heard in basses and bassoons, m. 334, then repeated in m. 336, then, with cellos, in mm. 338-343]

In a powerfully swelling *ostinato* repetition, it presses on to the decisive moment. Horns and trumpets find the path to a long-held A. Holding this firmly, at the climax of the buildup they bring about the liberating turn to the dominant seventh chord on A. With full strength, the trumpet fanfares resound in D major, continued by horns and woodwinds in A. With a victorious sweep of the dominant, they lead to the resumption of the previously only visionary D-major nature theme, now ringing out in the full sonic strength of the horns and trombones. The vision has become a joyous sounding reality. As before, the song theme follows. This time, however, it sounds out in the bright, radiant color of the trumpet. Supplemented by the woodwinds and without falling back into its playful wandering, it now leads with a short, impetuous upswing back to the main theme, which now marches in triumphantly in a trumpet *fortissimo*, repeated canonically by the basses. The melodic force is now freed from all crippling counteractions. In an unrestrained jubilation of the full orchestra, it presses forward until, at the peak of its power, it has exhausted its diatonic urge to motion. Turning back to the source motive of its existence, the call of a fourth, it closes the tempestuous course with its high-spirited, jubilant call from the violins down to the timpani.

Without considering the slow introduction, the course of this movement represents, according to its internal structure, a struggle for the free unfolding of the melodic forces that are locked in the main theme. In the exposition, these achieve a more playful than exhaustive inner activity and then sink, as if they were still too shallowly rooted, back into the unmoving calm of the introduction. That which follows from here, the awakening call of deeper forces and the vision of the nature theme, which had dawned in a mystical promise, in the purity of its harmonic splendor, awakens new melodic urges which initially however, under the pressure of the opposing manifestations, only achieve a restricted development. The confrontation must first take place. It occurs in the large F-minor crisis of the movement, which becomes the birthplace of the Finale. Here, it flows into the breakthrough,⁸ proclaimed by fanfares, of the nature theme, shining out in full harmonic glory. With this, a free path is created for the main theme. [46] The singing, playing, urging forces that lie within it are unfolded to an unrestrained brilliance and finally lead back again to the fourth motive out of which this theme had arisen and into which it returns as if coming back under its spiritual spell. With this, the first metamorphosis of the fourth motive is concluded. The adventure of this theme was the principal content of the movement. Through the unfolding of this adventure, however, visions are brought forth that could here perhaps be appeased, but not clarified. The countermelody, which for the time being is insufficient, only recognized and unfolded with a small portion of its energy, still awaits its development. Along with it, the exhaustion of the elemental motives of the work remains in reserve.

One can naturally also view the movement in terms of its compositional technique and layout, although in this particular case, this type of viewpoint is not very productive, emphasizes

the incidental, and subordinates the significant. In the very simply constructed exposition, the bird trill theme would be granted the significance of a second theme, while in reality it only belongs to the retinue of the main theme. After the repetition of the exposition, the development would then begin with the deployment of a new thematic group: that of the song theme that begins recitative-like in the cellos, of the countermelody that develops out of the chromatic motive, and of the horn theme in D major that proceeds out of the nature motive. This development section comprises the complete expansion up until the *fortissimo* intonation of the horn theme. It is followed by the return of the main section as the first theme is taken up by trumpet and basses and the second theme is given in D major. The short coda, developed out of the fourth motive, attaches itself directly onto it. This thematic analysis is therefore applicable and shows that the work is also suitable for a pedantic consideration.⁹ But at the same time, it blurs the main lines of the inner development and therefore shows the fruitlessness of this kind of consideration, which shoves the technical craft of the compositional labor into the foreground. It is only useful insofar as it shows with what strength of inner animation Mahler permeated the constructive layout, how he filled it with the creative impulse and knew how to make the schematic parts of it completely forgettable, without allowing the valuable aspects of the old sonata-form movement—the organizational strength of the construction—to be missed.

The first movement has brought the first metamorphosis of the basic motive: its appearance as a forcefully striding, melodically rounded theme that is suited for the origination of a broadly executed symphonic narrative. The second movement, following directly in the presentation, brings the second metamorphosis. It appears without preparation, and this time it

also needs none. It is not, like the theme of the first movement, the outflow of a slowly gathered melodic energy. It is pure rhythmic force that discharges itself in stamping two-bar periods in the basses and cellos that continue to be heard as an *ostinato*.



[Example 1-40: cellos and basses, mm. 1-2]

The first upper voices to enter, violins and violas, also strengthen, with their coarsely sweeping, joyfully shouting upbeats: [47]



[Example 1-41: violins and violas, mm. 2-3],

the rhythmic weight of the opening motive, to which they also provide a simple harmonic supplement. Only the entry of the woodwind choir brings a melodic canopy to the two basic rhythmic formulas:



[Example 1-42: 1st flute, 1st oboe, 1st clarinet, mm. 8-14]

For this theme, the motive of a fourth is also decisive at the outset, at the melodic rise in the third measure, and in the following three closing bars. The fourth thus remains, as in the first movement, the kernel around which the growth of the theme begins. If one observes that the line from the second to the fourth measure corresponds to the main theme of the first movement note for note, the dance theme of the second movement reveals itself as a reorganization of the first D-major theme, in which the emphasis is shifted from the unfolding of melody to the stressing of rhythm. The layout of the whole movement and the further direction of the thematic ideas correspond to this. It is not directed at the spreading of melodic urges, but primarily at an ever sharper hammering home of the basic rhythmic idea. Out of this arises a structure with the dispensing of drawn-out thematic-motivic work, the emphasis of all characteristic rhythms, and their further direction into modulating, changing motion. The orchestral layout shows avoidance of soloistic effects and uniting of the individual groups for choral effects. The harmony is notable for the retention of a single sonority for the broadest possible periods, with sudden jarring transitions to new keys along with the circumvention of chromatic alterations and the preference for distinctly shaded modulations by thirds and fifths. All these technical stylistic attributes arise from the subordination of the whole to the dominant rhythmic force. In its significance as a pulsating, ordering force of nature, it rules here and determines the course of the movement.

The first statements of the theme already identify this type of formation from the rhythmic impulse. In the basses is the restlessly stamping main motive, in the strings the rising, sweeping motive, and in the woodwinds the dance melody. Only in the ninth measure does a sudden turn from A major to E major follow. This is retained during the short epilogue, in which

the accumulated energy of the main rhythm, in eighth-note *staccatos* that are playfully passed here and there, gently eases and then collects itself anew. Then there follows, with a similarly jarring turn back to A major, the repetition with exchanged roles. The woodwinds take over the sweeping motive, the strings take the dance melody, and only the weighty stamping motive remains for the basses. This time, the turn to E major already takes place in the fifth measure and leads to a broad cadence and conclusion in the dominant key. A repetition of this entire brief first section precedes the takeover of the stamping motive by bassoons and horns, to which the first violins provide a complement with pointed *pizzicato* beats. The upper woodwinds lead the melody, and in the second violins and violas is a blustery accompanying motive in broken chords:



[Example 1-43: second violins and violas, m. 44, repeated through m. 51]

The whole is harmonically based on E, but it pushes itself abruptly down to D and from there to C-sharp, here supplemented by a “wildly” (“wild”) entering, but then pleasingly supple violin melody: [48]



[Example 1-44: violins, mm. 68-71]

The eighth-note motion rolls further along, as if seeking a way out of the weird, almost sinister C-sharp major. But the basses hold this C-sharp with unyielding firmness. Trombones join in with the main stamping motive on C-sharp, and horns intone the dance melody in C-sharp. The motion intensifies over sharply dissonant collisions of the upper voices with the basses, on to the establishment of C-sharp major in the full orchestra, and only then letting up with suddenly decreasing strength. The upper voices disappear, and only the basses continue to mutter in busy eighth-note motion, further circumscribing their C-sharp:



[Example 1-45: cellos and basses, mm. 108-109]

Only as they find themselves alone and unchallenged do they sink in a chromatic descent over C, B, and B-flat again down to A. Quietly joining in, violins, woodwinds, and horns find their way back again with the opening themes. With powerful brilliance, the dance melody appears in trumpets and horns along with the stamping motive of the basses, accompanied by trilling violins. The building turn to the dominant, however, is dispensed with this time, and over a brief swing to D major, the main key is again reached. After a short preparatory pedal point on E, the last sweep up to the dance follows in the horns. Then the main movement closes with jubilant A-major trills in all woodwinds and blaring triplets in the trumpets.

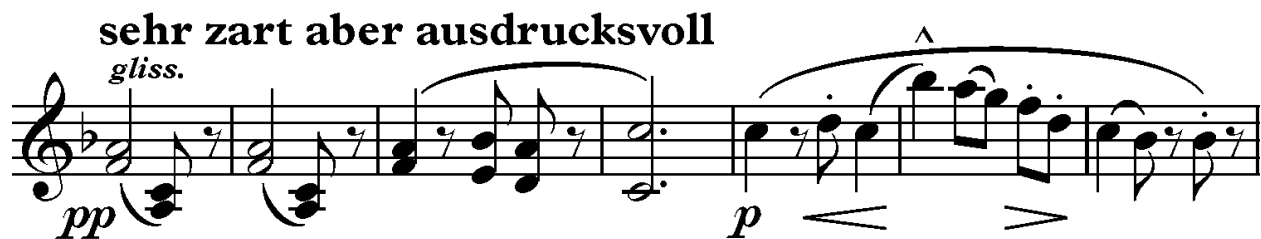
The whole of this movement is a rhythmic experience of unusually increasing strength and compelling intensity. As far as melodic formations play any role therein, namely the dance tune and the later-appearing C-sharp-major melody, they retain secondary significance. The

melodic development here serves exclusively for enlivening and tightening the tension of the rhythmic element. For the same purpose, the dynamic and harmonic effects are subordinated. They also, particularly the C-sharp-major buildup, held firm with almost dogged tenacity and led to the brink of a sinister demonism through its wildness and long duration, only receive their special meaning through the active rhythmic forces that achieve their unfolding within them. Their presentation and summation of the statements of primitive force in the beginning, across the amassing of the C-sharp-major buildup, and on to the closing measures that vibrate in the highest excitement, identify the movement as a continuation of the motivic manifestations that appeared in the first movement into the areas of rhythmic and elemental life.

While corresponding in formal structure to the scherzo, this movement deviates significantly in its character from the scherzo type established by Beethoven. The vibrant, bustling, swirling, melodically disembodied rhythm, the urge to a resolution of firm melodic contours into a language of buoyant rhythmic accents, is lacking. The tempo has something cumbersome about it, and the melody, although relegated to the service of rhythmic vitality, displays a coarse, if vigorous cut. It does not lie, as in Beethoven, upon the spinning out of a short motive, usually of only one bar, but rather encompasses a genuine, song-like, rounded period. Also lacking are the suddenly jerking [49] accents. In their place come wide ranging dynamic and harmonic surface effects. It is not the resolving and incorporeal, but rather the solidly earthbound aspect of the rhythmic force that is brought forward with all resources, even in the nature of the instrumental treatment. In the place of the skipping *spiccato* effects of the strings come hard-thrusting, firmly grounded *staccatos* or clumsy, swirling *legato* phrases. The stamping motive that directs the entire movement is assigned to the basses, horns, or trombones

throughout, and the desire to achieve heavily weighted, compact sound effects likewise speaks from the choral scoring of the woodwind and string groups. In character, then, a new type of middle movement appears here. It represents in a certain sense a step back from Beethoven to the minuet of the symphony before Beethoven. It shares with this old minuet the measured rhythm of the main tempo, the firmly closed periodicity of the theme, the strong and recognizably organized construction, and the direct dependence upon a song-like dance type. From the scherzo of Beethoven, it takes over the rich and thorough internal shaping, the diversity of images, and in contrast to the first sonata movement, the symphonic organism that is driven not by the actions of themes, but by intensification of the rhythmic impulse. Mahler thus reaches, as did Beethoven, beyond the uncomplicated dance form of the old style, not through the establishment of a new one, but rather through the full internal reshaping of an old dance form that is closer to the suite than to the symphony.

In this new invention of the second movement, which takes the place of the scherzo, there lies a meaningful achievement in artistic style by Mahler. It does not rely on any suggestions of Bruckner, but is of a completely personal origin throughout. In contrast, a Brucknerian ancestry is apparent in the idyll of the Trio, which begins, after a short transition made up of long-held horn calls, with a tenderly rocking Ländler theme:



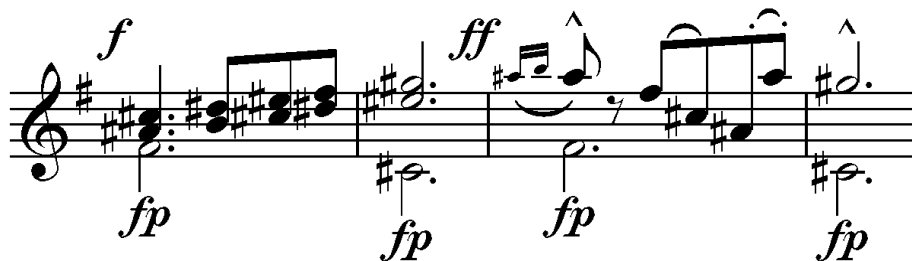
[Example 1-46: violins, mm. 175-178; oboe, mm. 179-181]

An intermezzo mainly held to the transparent and tender sounds of strings and woodwinds. In contrast to the main portion, it is primarily reserved for a playfully but delicately moving development of melodic inspirations, of which the first carries Brucknerian, the rapturous second Schubertian characteristics:



[Example 1-47: first violins and cellos, mm. 219-222]

Here as well there is an interruption brought by the motive of a fourth, which enters suddenly in both horns with a surprising F-sharp-major turn and is played around melodically by trumpets and flutes:



[Example 1-48: horns, trumpets, flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 229-232]¹⁰

But this episode loses itself again after a few measures. The airy mood of the Trio asserts itself. A graceful wind motive:



[Example 1-49: trumpet, mm. 247-250],

derived from the first theme and played about by new melodic accompanying voices, stands in line as the last of the Trio melodies. In alternating modulations, it leads from C across E-flat and back to C, then to the dissolution of the idyllic little sound picture in *pianissimo* string figures sinking to the depths. [50] Again it is the horn which, after a brief pause, arises, quietly calling, and prepares the renewed statement of the main movement. It now appears in an abbreviated setting. The C-sharp-major turn with its entire development falls away. The A-major mood, only interrupted by brief deviations in the dominant and subdominant, rules the whole and is led, similarly to before the entrance of the Trio, in undisturbed strength and joy of sound to the final buildup.

The development that has proceeded to this point can be represented as an unfolding, directed upward in a straight line, of all the melodic and rhythmic forces of an active character that lie in the fundamental motive of a fourth. This action brought the awakening and thematic diffusion of the D-major melody in the first movement. Under the increasing influences of opposing forces, it asserted and solidified itself until, after an unrestrained outward flow, it closed its course by returning triumphantly to the fourth motive. The second movement, beginning with the climb to the dominant key of A major, leads the line of inner development further from the point where the first movement broke off. Melodic outfitting and linear development no longer come into consideration. The basic motive remains unchanged in its

motivic appearance. Through the rhythmic power that resides within it, it calls forth a sequence of new appearances from another fantastical sphere. It acts here directly then, preserving its generative power in that it creates new formations through its rhythmic swings. The second movement is thus a direct consequence and continuation of the first, as the theme that there arose and was established is driven up to the highest intensification. With that, its course is closed, and the first part of the work—Mahler does not yet apply this description that was later used by him for the grouping of movements, but it already appears to be justified here—is ended.

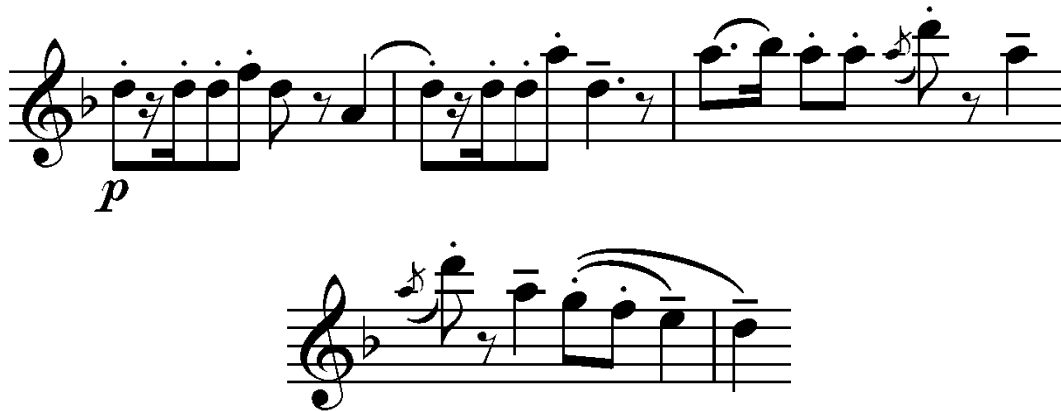
Certainly the nature motive is not yet exhausted in its full scope with this. The problems that have been touched in the introduction are in no way solved, and the symphony as a whole is still in its exposition. There lacks the decisive unrolling of the opposing motives, their definitive confrontation with the main theme. Bringing these to pass is the assignment of the last two movements which, according to the direction in the score, follow one another directly and are therefore to be grouped together as the second part of the symphony. Their opposition to the first part already arises from the keys. There, bright major colors: the warm and lively D major and the radiant A major. Here, dark minor tones: the dull, heavily shadowed D minor and the gloomy but agitated F minor.¹¹ This sequence of keys already gives an indication that between the two closing movements there is a similar relationship of intensification as there was between the two previous ones, even if the individual positioning of the closing movements toward each other is different. The first of them is the shorter one and has, despite its independence, a preparatory character. It stands in the place of the otherwise usual Adagio. The tempo is, as that would be, “solemn and measured” (“feierlich und gemessen”), but the layout displays such a strong

It constantly sounds further, carrying the entire first section, which develops as an expansion of the D-minor triad that builds in orchestration, yet proceeds dynamically without a single *crescendo*. A muffled monotony rules the 38 measures of this first section. Its depressing effect, caused by the oppressive sameness of the basses that oscillate in unchanging lockstep, is strengthened even more by the leading of the upper voices. Climbing from the depths, they canonically lay out an eight-measure D-minor melody with regular repetition:



125

This melody, an old folk song that is sung to different texts in different areas,¹² is again divided into two-bar units. Each measure is repeated, and thus the character of tired, dragging sadness and sameness is brought even more strongly to the fore. As a third thematic element, a countermelody appears in the oboes, patterned rhythmically after the fifth measure of the canon, melodically a new paraphrase of the fourth motive:



[Example 1-52: oboe, mm. 19-23]¹³

It remains almost exclusively in the oboes and is, with its timid, hesitant *staccato* effects and sobbing grace notes, whose prominence is made especially sharp by the pointed sound of the instrument, within the crawling *legato* of all the other voices, the only lively appearance, as it were, in this impression of a motionless shadow world. Soft tam-tam beats, added to the long-held pedal point D in the tuba, reinforce the eeriness of the sound picture. With the takeover of the canon melody by horns and harp, all voices have been interwoven into the dark fabric, and this unwinds again, finishing on the bell-like, echoing D of horns and harp. The dull, depressed mood dispenses itself into a restlessly swaying, chromatically interlaced oboe melody of Bohemian coloration that is led in thirds:

aber ausdrucksvoll



pp rit. a tempo ziemlich langsam

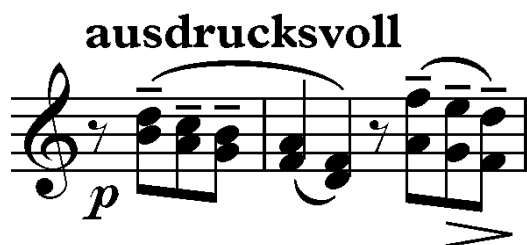
[Example 1-53: oboes, mm. 38-39]

Its sighing conclusion:



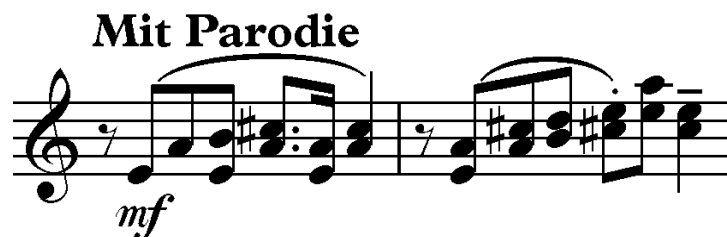
[Example 1-54: oboes, mm. 41-42]

and the trumpet melody that supplements it:



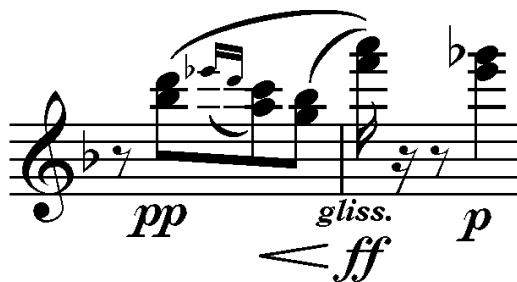
[Example 1-55: trumpets, mm. 39-40]

already bring a hint of that lamenting turn of the expressive buildup that is shown in the following continuation. Woodwinds, including the shrill-sounding E-flat clarinet, and trumpets, interrupting each other as they build, intone this melodic phrase:



[Example 1-56: E-flat clarinets, mm. 45-46]

Through the snapping effect of the highest note, it obtains an unintentionally humorous color. The melodic direction remains in the winds at first, with the string section accompanying guitar-like in rocking *pizzicato* chords, supported by cymbal [52] and bass drum. “With parody” (“Mit Parodie”), prescribes Mahler—the deeply serious mood of the first section changes into a grotesque lamenting mood, as if the representation of an oppressive, inwardly shattering occurrence is presented in the style of a ballad singer. The grotesque in the expression builds further at the takeover of the melody by the violins, and reaches a climax at the closing phrase, which begins energetically and then suffocates in a pathetically mewling dissonance:



[Example 1-57: first violins, mm. 58-59]

From there on the voices lose themselves in chromatic sighs, and the timpani motive comes forward. While the last sounds of this interlude are still fading quietly away in the upper voices, the bassoon, accompanied by the viola with the supplementary oboe motive, takes up the canon

theme again—only once, as a reminiscence of the gloomy, oppressive primary mood. Then this appearance also loses itself in the fourth motive of the timpani until at last this, becoming gradually inaudible, disappears and only the long-held deep D of the horns lingers secretively.

This D quietly revives again. The first horn pair takes it up, muted, flutes and clarinets join in soft, pedal-like quarter-note syncopations, and the harp expands it harmonically, leading into the subdominant G major. The cellos also take up the new harmonies in gently rocking eighth-note *pizzicati*. It is like sinking into a liberating, yet deeply melancholy dream mood, which suddenly allows a new melody of tender charm to blossom forth in muted violins:



[Example 1-58: first violins, mm. 85-89; first flute, mm. 89-91]

“Sehr einfach und schlicht wie eine Volksweise” (“Very simple and plain like a folk melody”), writes Mahler. He himself had already used this melody earlier. The first measures are already found—with minimal alterations—in one of the youthful *Wunderhorn* songs: in the melancholy “Und nun Ade mein herzallerliebster Schatz” (“And now farewell, dearest treasure of my heart”) at the ghostly turn to major set to the words that the young man calls into the grave to the dead bride:



[Example 1-59: “Nicht wiedersehen!”, vocal line, mm. 51-57, text “Ei du mein herzallerliebster Schatz, / Mach auf dein tiefes Grab! / Du hörst kein Glöcklein läuten.” (“Oh, you dearest treasure of my heart, / Open your deep grave! / You hear no little bell ringing.”)]

From the third line on there then follows another continuation of the melody. Completely finished, it is found in the last of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, which like that *Wunderhorn* song commences in a minor mood that is full of denial: “Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz, die haben mich in die weite Welt geschickt” (“The two blue eyes of my sweetheart, they have sent me into the wide world”), and at the conclusion likewise transitions into a dreamlike major resolution:

Auf der Straße steht ein Lindenbaum,
Da hab ich zum erstenmal im Traum geruht
Unter dem Lindenbaum –
Der hat seine Blüten über mich geschneit,
Da wußt ich nicht wie das Leben tut,
War alles wieder gut.
Ach alles! Lieb und Leid
Und Welt und Traum.

On the path stands a linden tree,
There I rested for the first time in a dream
Under the linden tree –
It snowed down its blossoms over me,
Then I knew not how life can be,
Everything was well again.
Ah, everything! Love and pain
And world and dream.

[53] It is a matter here of a melody over whose form Mahler struggled for a long time,

and which appeared in these years as a symbol of the liberation from pain through dreaming. In the first version he is only capable of establishing the outlines of the opening period. Later he succeeds in developing the line to a fuller intensity and also in finding an organic connection to the introductory minor portion. Only the symphony, however, brought the setting of the melody that fulfilled its complete emotional value. The melody itself is unchanged in relation to the song version, both in its enraptured ascent in the opening as well as in the chromatically pervaded continuation and the gently lulling postlude. With the framing that the whole has found within the symphonic movement, however, its emotional meaning has achieved its full significance. The sinking into the painfully happy dream mood is only properly achieved through the opposition to the weighty oppression of the D-minor movement. One can therefore say that Mahler perhaps here did not take over the mood of a song in the symphony, but rather the opposite: that he made several attempts to express a vision of sound that he imagined, at first in the song form, until the symphonic structure helped him to the definitive version. It is therefore not the words that are the source of this tender, inwardly moving melody. The idea of the melody and the urge to give it shape were first allowed by Mahler to reach to the aid of words, first someone else's and then his own, until the appearance from the depths of dark feelings was driven to the light and could only now, within the symphony, show itself in its very own meaning. It is a typical process for Mahler's song output, which in view of the numerous uses of his songs in the symphonies—as already seen in the theme of the first movement—demands particular attention. It would be a misjudgment of Mahler's method of creation if one were to speak in such cases of transcriptions. Transcriptions are not present here, rather the definitive and actual forms arise which are found after a long and searching preparation. And it is not the

words that lead to the recognition of the poetic meaning of such melodies. These words were only stammering helpers toward the invocation of a musical manifestation whose origin lies beyond all words and concepts, and which in its completed form elucidates the words far more than the words do for it. A poetic interpretation of such movements or parts of movements with the help of the song texts can therefore not be considered.¹⁴ It would force the appearances that achieve completion in the symphonic realm back to a subordinate level of development. In addition, it is superfluous, for this musical language speaks so clearly that its poetic paraphrase could only distort the tenderness of its expression.

The song fades away in G minor. The canon melody begins anew, but changed in key, pushed up from D minor to E-flat minor, and in this chromatic disguise appears one degree more secretive and fantastically unreal. The melodic direction now remains reserved for the winds, and only one time do the violins briefly take up the sobbing countersubject. In the trumpets sounds a new countermelody: [54]



[Example 1-60: trumpets, mm. 124-131]

The mood of this section is related, through the prevalence of the winds, which are only

complemented by string basses along with the harp on the bell-like, echoing fourth motive, to that of the parodistic pathos in the first interlude, to which it also leads. The “ballad singer” aspect in this caricature of a heroic motive, which is now again taken up by the C and E-flat clarinets, obtains this time, through the accompanying off-beat rhythms of trombones and tuba, an even more grotesque character:



[Example 1-61: trombones and tuba, mm. 132-133]

With an almost unnoticeably gentle shift, the violins lead from the fantastic E-flat minor back to the main key of D minor. The tempo speeds up, and the different thematic appearances press themselves together: in the harp and bassoon is the canon melody, in the trumpet the new counterpoint from the E-flat-minor section, now distinctly “coming forward” (“hervortretend”), as well as the Bohemian tune in flutes, oboes, and clarinets, broadened into a completely closed version:



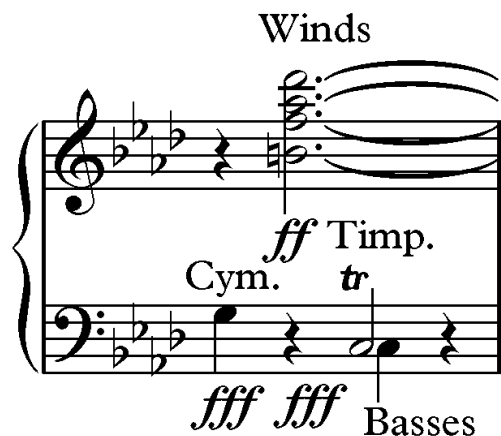
[Example 1-62: flutes, oboes, clarinets (including E-flat clarinet), mm. 139-140]

It is a powerful swelling in tempo and dynamics, until the upper string voices again provide a tenderly singing, ballad-like close. The lamenting voices gradually fade in chromatic melismas that trail away. Fragments of the canon melody sound from the harp, the sobbing oboe melody is heard one more time in the bassoon, and finally the fourth motive of the timpani echoes forth from a great distance—then the image vanishes in the darkness, like an eerie nocturnal funeral procession.

A piece of this sort of demonic character had not been written in the German symphony since the Scherzo of Beethoven's Fifth. One could in any case make reference to the visionary and fantastic symphonic movements of Berlioz. These, however, lack exactly that which is most decisive in Mahler: the deep, inwardly experiential aspect. With Berlioz in such episodes—the “March to the Scaffold” is the most characteristic example—the depiction of an eerie horror stands in the forefront, while with Mahler, this depiction is set primarily as the feeling that accompanies a shattering emotional event. That this event is not given in an agitated, passionate language, but in an apparently unfeeling and unmoving representation, heightens the oppressive nature of the impression. A new aspect individual to Mahler is the parodistic element, which certainly displays nothing of humor in the amusing sense, but rather serves to heighten the sinister emotional tension through opposing effects. It is a dark, despairing irony which generates this demonic humor. Although it obtains a conciliatory counterbalance in the liberating G-major vision of the folk melody, it is only temporarily quieted through this soothing effect, and as soon as the dream vanishes, it breaks forth all the more painfully and with greater inner agitation.

The meaning of the fourth motive has experienced a curious change in this movement. It

rules both externally and emotionally to an extent surpassing the previous movements. With the exception of the [55] parodistic intermezzi and the G-major vision, it pervades the movement from the first to the last bar, with its evenly meandering rhythm that now sounds like the solemn steps of a funeral march and now like a muffled bell sound, almost in the style of a *basso ostinato*. But with this, it has lost the active and generative energy of the two opening movements. It has lost its soul, so to speak, and become a shadowy phantasm, a ghostly counterpart of its earlier lively force, robbed of every initiative and sentenced to a paralyzing monotony. A new element has come into the world of the symphony that has been moved by cheerful forces. A subterranean element, which had stirred in the C-sharp-major episode of the second movement and even more so in the F-minor crisis of the first with brief, quickly placated suggestions, has now, however, risen in the course of the inner developmental curve of the third movement to an awful pressure, and now suddenly breaks out with a piercing cry:



[Example 1-63: fourth movement, all wind, percussion, and low string parts condensed, m. 1]

With it the last movement begins.

This Finale is the main movement of the work. In it the threads come together that had been spun by the three preceding movements. Here they are combined and woven from the initial disorder into a radiant fabric. The two opening movements were essentially dedicated to the awakening and spreading of a one-directional, or one could say a worldly, naively egotistical, empirical melodic force, so to speak. The third movement brought for the first time the idea of a dark power whose nature was unrecognizable, under whose crippling spell it stood, unable to free itself from its pressure or to comprehend it at all. The last movement now leads this power, until now only threatening in suggestions or indirect actions, to its unfolding into a conflict, penetrating to the depths, with the upward striving fundamental energies of the work.

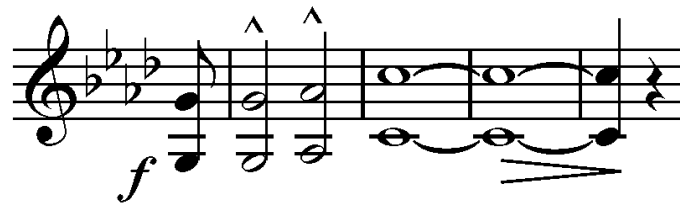
To recognize the developmental line of this movement, it is necessary to have its architectonic structure before the eyes. It shows three main sections. In themselves variously layered further, they resemble the layout of a sonata movement, though certainly with significant deviations from the usual scheme. The first section comprises the group of the first theme, which already experiences an independent extension with introduction, presentation, development, and coda. The principal key here is F minor. It changes at the conclusion of the section, which comprises around 170 measures, with a sudden shift to the dominant seventh chord on A-flat, which prepares the coming D-flat major of the second section. This comprises in 250 measures a second theme, along with its development, and culminates in an anticipation of the later coda. Its harmonic line leads from the D-flat major of the second theme to the D major of the conclusion—from the world of the first Finale theme back to the main key of the work. Corresponding to the sonata scheme, the recapitulation of the first theme must now follow. It is dispensed with. Instead, the coda follows immediately as a third main section. It is

in any case a coda that is laid out in such a gigantic extent—it comprises no less than [56] 300 measures—that it could count as a finale in itself.¹⁵ In relation to the two preceding main sections, it signifies a similar summation as does the entire Finale in relation to the first three movements. It begins in D minor with the return of the introduction to the first movement, then turns, passing over a short reminiscence of the second theme in F major, to the F-minor theme, which once again reaches a development, and flows into an apotheosis that leads the Finale and introductory themes to a hymn-like intensification.

One must be aware of this structural outline in order to recognize the constructive strength that has formed this movement and back to which the overpowering impact of the whole is primarily directed. The musical architecture appears here as an independent element of the action. Whether the listener is aware of it or not, it influences him more deeply than the directly perceptible thematic events. The strength and foresighted consciousness of the linear direction reach far beyond the life of the musical appearances where they manifest themselves. They are in movements of this kind the actual creative element. In their unfolding is shown the great change and intensification that the symphonic concept in Mahler generally experiences. They are no longer individual themes with which he operates, they are great periodic structures, complexes with the extent and prestige of complete movements, which here come forward as active forces and demonstrate the events of a symphonic life. Their structural power now extends further, flooding over the individual obvious and perceptible thematic appearances and working itself out upon them.

The individual construction of the three main sections corresponds to the great linear direction of the whole. The first section is divided again into three parts: introduction,

development, and coda. “With stormy motion” (“Stürmisch bewegt”), “Energetic” (“Energisch”), and “With great wildness” (“Mit großer Wildheit”) read the three characteristic performance indications. They characterize the essential mood of this section, which belongs exclusively to the unfolding of the first Finale theme. A pedal point C spanning over 54 measures provides the dominant foundation for the exposition. It begins with a harsh, long-sounding *fortissimo* scream in the winds. Wild runs of violins and violas chase up to the triple *forte*, *tremolo* unison string C, and from trumpets and trombones sounds the opening of the powerfully striding main theme:



[Example 1-64: trumpets and trombones, mm. 6-10. Trumpets and trombones 3 and 4, then trumpet and trombone 2, successively drop out in mm. 8-10; 1st trumpet and trombone only on the first beat of m. 10]¹⁶

It is not new—the F-minor episode of the first movement has already brought it as a prophetic hint. Now, however, it appears in unrestrained, demonic power. The chromatic triplet motive answers, directed against the thematic motion, thrusting forcefully downward—first in unison woodwinds, then strings, and finally horns, trumpets, and bassoons:



[Example 1-65: piccolos, flutes, oboes, and clarinets, mm. 8-9]

The strings storm onward, churning, interrupted by hammered F-minor blows from the brass choir and then by the triplet call of the full wind band: the second part of the F-minor theme, likewise known from the first movement, sounds out in unison of the heavy brass:



[Example 1-66: trumpets and trombones, mm. 19-24]

[57] The triplet motive follows again and now passes over into a heavily breathing chromatic surge in the upper voices. The triplet motive sounds further, with the final note D-flat rubbing hard against the continuously sounding pedal point C. It appears with magnified rhythmic strength in augmentation, pressing ever more violently to the depths until, as the woodwinds and horns roughly cut in with G-flat major, the trumpets and trombones again begin with the imperious upward-directed main theme on F:



[Example 1-67: woodwinds and horns, mm. 39-41; trumpets and trombones, mm. 39-42]

Ascending chromatically over F-sharp to the opening note G, it now commandingly asserts itself and closes the dominant buildup with a short F-minor turn. From the “stormy motion” (“stürmisch bewegt”) of the introduction, the “energetic” (“energisch”) main theme becomes

prominent as the governing force. Given to horns, oboes, and clarinets, it appears in a combination of its two motivic parts and stretches them in unrestrained forward penetration to a broadly marching thematic period:



[Example 1-68: oboes and clarinets, mm. 54-73; various horn doublings, mm. 54-60, 63-64, 66, 70-73; trumpets, mm. 67-72]

Of the motivic components of this theme that is spun out over 20 measures, the A-flat-major turn from the fifth to the eighth measures is apparently new. In reality it is also rooted in the first movement: it is a freely continued transformation of its contrasting theme. The third group from the ninth to the twelfth measures is taken in the same way from the opening of the first movement, a restructuring of the song theme that in this version also had already shown up there. The fourth group, beginning in the thirteenth measure, emerges as a downward directed contrary motion to the beginning, which then undergoes a closing intensification through the fifth group. The whole theme therefore represents itself as a summation of the minor-key

motivic structures that already appeared episodically in the first movement into an irrefutable, urgent thematic energy. In a violent onslaught, this motion continues. The F-minor character is preserved throughout with minimal deviations, and thus the uniform, unbending force is increased. As a contrapuntal countermelody to the opening motive, a new, downward directed motive appears in flutes, oboes, and clarinets:



[Example 1-69: flutes, oboes, clarinets, trumpets, first trombone, mm. 73-75]

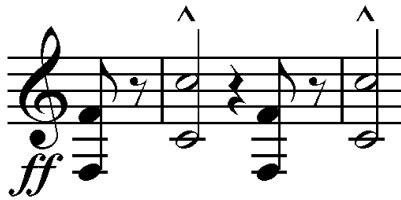
It develops itself into its own thematic formation:



[Example 1-70: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 75-81]

Until this point, the motivic direction was exclusively entrusted to the winds, while the strings followed the leading wind voices or circumscribed them in violently rushing eighth-note runs. The main thematic accents stayed in the brass: trumpets and trombones, along with horns led in broad unison. The woodwinds provided the thematic [58] countersubjects, and a long streaming *fortissimo* constituted the basic dynamic color. Now, after the first powerful F-minor conclusion, the strings take over the direction. The tone color temporarily loses its metallic character. The song theme of the first movement with its sharply cutting accents churns further, preparing a new

onslaught. It announces itself with the entry of the opening motive in trumpets and trombones and initiates, after abbreviated fanfare-like horn calls:



[Example 1-71: horns, mm. 101-103],

F minor for the third time. Now it is primarily the powerfully thrusting third bar of the theme that works in call and response between the trombones and the rest of the passionately moving orchestra as an unrelenting driving force until, with the closing group of the theme, the entire orchestra, with massive chords carried only by the continued stirring of the eighth-note motion in the basses, turns to the end of the development. “With great wildness” (“Mit großer Wildheit”), the F-minor motion exhausts itself over the firm and final tonic in the basses and arrives at a gradual diminishing and calming of the voices. The chromatic triplet sounds out, fading into the F minor as it dies away. A modulation of Schubertian simplicity: the dominant seventh on A-flat, placed directly beside the last F minor as a transitional harmony, and an “extremely tender but expressive” (“äußerst zart aber ausdrucksvoll”), chromatically thrusting violin line mediate the transition to the second section.

If one considers the course of the first section, one can, in the deeper sense, speak here neither of a thematic development nor of a working-out, only of an unrolling, a release of the forces pent up within the theme. The organic elements of the theme are unchanged. Perhaps it is broken down into its motivic elements and then brought back together, but on the whole, it remains in the details as it was. It does not experience anything—it works, so to speak, as a

force of nature which breaks out and is violently discharged, albeit without experiencing anything transformative in itself. This section cannot serve as a development in the sense of an internally altered formation of the evolutionary forces that lie within the theme. It is only an impetuous onward rush, liberating the thematic forces—without any opposition upon which these forces can prove themselves. It is an insatiable rummaging in F-minor sounds, marching and storming in hard, imperative rhythms and penetrative melodic passages, a powerful breakout of the elemental forces that were dammed up in the preceding movements. Yet it is still without a course or a goal, without an internal stimulation, collapsing into itself after it has been discharged. A transition via motivic formations would not be possible here, for the motivic elements of this section are not yet generative and cannot yet carry a development. Only an opposing contrast is capable of giving them an internal stimulation. This contrast now enters almost without mediation, only brought about by the most utterly simple harmonic and chromatic turns, and also as a complete and internally closed appearance beside the preceding one. Like that one, this one also still knows nothing outside of itself. Like that one, this one is an appearance that lies within itself, untouched by every interaction—yet of a completely different nature: tender and calm where the other was rough and stormy, flowing in broad *legato* where [59] the other stomped in brief, hammered steps. A song melody, stretched out in a large arc that restarts again and again, resting completely in its own beauty, richly moving in expression and yet, like the storm theme, requiring in itself no supplementation. It is world in itself, insatiable and inexhaustible in conjuring up ever new, deeply satisfying melodious sounds, like the storm theme was in its F-minor passions. And just like that theme, this one ultimately expires and sinks once again within itself:

Sehr gesangvoll

pp *sempre pp* aber *espress.*

Poco Rit.

espress.

ppp *pp*

cresc. poco accel. *poco rit.* *zurückhaltend* *breit* *3* *molto*

espress. *Rubato* *rit.* *mit* *mf*

großem Ton *nur ein kurzes Anhalten* *G-Saite* *ff* *accel.* *mf* *fff* *Vcl. espr.*

Horn *p*

The musical score consists of seven staves of music in a single system. The first staff begins with the instruction 'Sehr gesangvoll' and features a melody with a 'pp' dynamic. The second staff continues the melody with 'sempre pp' and 'espress.' markings, followed by 'Poco Rit.' and 'espress.'. The third staff shows a 'ppp' dynamic with crescendo and decrescendo hairpins, ending with a 'pp' dynamic. The fourth staff includes 'cresc. poco accel.', 'poco rit.', 'zurückhaltend', 'breit', a triplet of eighth notes, and a 'molto' marking. The fifth staff features 'espress.', 'Rubato', 'rit.', 'mit', and 'mf' dynamics. The sixth staff has 'großem Ton', 'nur ein kurzes Anhalten', 'G-Saite', 'ff', 'accel.', 'mf', 'fff', and 'Vcl. espr.' markings. The seventh staff is for the 'Horn' and starts with a 'p' dynamic. The music is written in a key with three flats and a 3/4 time signature.

[Example 1-72: first violins, mm. 175-222, doubled at the octave by cellos, mm. 179-190, 205-209, doubled at the octave by second violins, mm. 191-205, 209-214, doubled in unison by second violins and violas, mm. 214-221; cellos (viola harmonies not included), mm. 222-226; horn, mm. 226-230; first violins, m. 230]¹⁷

Here is presented the curious example of a melody that spans over 46 measures, not counting the concluding cadences, flowing without interruption, with which one can perhaps make reference to individual motivic outlines and new beginnings, but which takes a unified course throughout. The internal suspense of its motion does not at all die out with the first arrival at the final D-flat, but it still also carries, with only gradually abating strength, the two cadential cello and horn epilogues. This melody cannot be considered as a seed for continuing motivic direction. What is within it in lively, further effective capability is consumed in the unusual intensity of its single presentation, in which it is as if every segment glows and is then melodically exhausted. The concentrated wealth of melodic formation, pushed to the utmost level, already closes all developmental capabilities within itself, raising its appearance to a perfecting and rounding of its essence, such that it could not be outdone by the results of a gradually progressing development.

As an individual appearance, the song melody, with its single passing over, is just as finished and complete in itself as was the preceding F-minor passage. Both are worlds that lie within themselves, representing utter opposites. The one is only passion without desire, only motion without a goal, the other is only beauty without passion, only serenity without any effective continuing motion. The one is without light, the other without darkness. Thus, both stand unresolved beside one another, and the primeval twilight of the first introduction sinks in again upon the D-flat that quietly continues to sound. The chromatically rising [60] motive awakens, rhythmically augmented, in the cellos. From the clarinets, the long-drawn nature motive sounds in a deep, mysteriously dark register. The melody obtains a sort of ghostly horror through dark colors presented with the utmost delicacy—timpani rolls, divided contrabasses with

the contra D-flat, cellos with the doubly elongated chromatic motive, muted violas and first violins with a deep held D-flat, the mystical deep register of the clarinet, and in addition gradually beginning, rustling string *tremolos* on the bridge. Into this gloomy, fantastical intermediate realm sounds suddenly and quietly the calling motive of the horns, answered by the downward pressing chromatic trumpet triplet:



[Example 1-73: horns, mm. 244-247]

It sounds for the second time, during which develops in the rest of the orchestra an inexorable *crescendo*, until at the third statement, breaking out with full strength in the trumpet and trombone, it tears through the mist and, “again as at the beginning, with stormy motion” (“wieder wie zu Anfang, stürmisch bewegt”), falls back into the passionate agitation of the movement opening. But it is no longer the internally closed F-minor passion of the first exposition. The key has been raised to G minor. Out of the motives of the exposition there appears only the first imperative call. The downward pressing triplet loses its rigid motivic stamp and changes into a violently marching quarter-note motive:



[Example 1-74: 2nd and 3rd oboes, clarinets, 1st and 2nd horns, mm. 255-257]

And now the passionate motives do not remain reserved for themselves. They also drag the song theme into the minor-key vortex:



[Example 1-75: 1st, 3rd, and 5th horns, mm. 266-269]

The countermelody is present. It increases the forces of passion to a yet more violent breakout, but it continues to be heard. While it is still not capable of reshaping the first group of minor motives, the last one, which was obtained from the contrary motion of the beginning, suddenly sounds out in bright C major from the woodwind choir, with quiet string trills playing around it:



[Example 1-76: 1st oboe, 1st clarinet, mm. 290-294; all clarinets, mm. 294-295]

It is only a brief, bright gleam in *fortissimo* that quickly sinks back again into a tender *pianissimo*. Soft fanfares sound behind it. The opening motive itself changes to major and is now heard in a continuing ascent that is filled with promise:



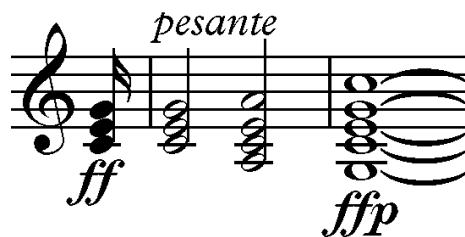
[Example 1-77: 1st trumpet, mm. 296-302]¹⁸

But the change is still too little established and too inwardly unsure. With doubled strength—
 “Woodwind instruments: bells high” (“Holzinstrumente: Schalltrichter hoch”)—the passionate
 motives again break forth, as if stamping down the gentle major sounds with impetuous force:



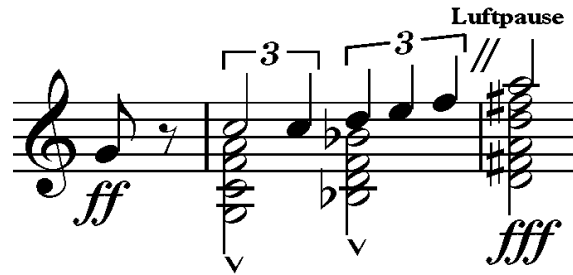
[Example 1-78: unison flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns, trumpets, mm. 315-321]

Once more the demonic minor unloads itself over the G pedal point with the full impact of an
 inexorable rhythm and a dissonant chromaticism, until the shining fanfare rhythm flows out of
 the unison G in a mighty C-major intonation of the opening motive by trumpets and trombones:



[Example 1-79: trumpets and trombones, mm. 368-370]

Insistent horn fanfares and plunging runs in woodwinds and strings firmly hold onto [61] this
 first fully triumphant sound. At the thematic continuation, it progresses with a surprising change,
 indicated by a “Luftpause,” or pause for breath,¹⁹ over B-flat major to D major:



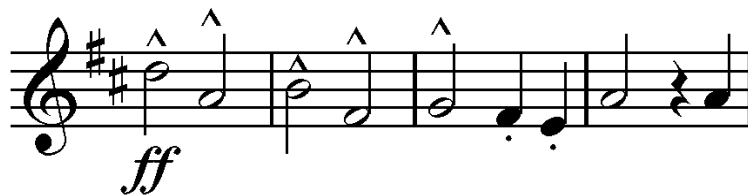
[Example 1-80: woodwinds and brass, led by oboes and trumpets, mm. 372-374]

With that, the victory is decided as the main key is reached. In a broad flow a festive sound now streams. The minor motive, raised threateningly and inaccessible to change, is also placed into the new harmonic circle as an enhancing force:



[Example 1-81: horns, mm. 383-385]

As the coronation and final confirmation of that which has been won, however, the nature motive now appears in luminous D major, leading and dominating the whole in a chorale-like, hymnal sweep:



[Example 1-82: horns, mm. 387-390]

until, with slowly abating strength, the splendor quietly pales and the harmonic fullness dissolves

into the long-echoing, hollow sound of the fifth, D–A–D.

The symphony could end here, and another besides Mahler would have probably closed here. The external narrative has ended. The Finale themes, initially opposites foreign in relation to one another, are brought into a relationship through the returning introduction. The minor motives have, under the effect of the song theme, found their way out of the aimless F-minor passion to a highly active major-key transformation. The relapse into the minor mood has been made impossible by the decisive leap into the D-major sphere, and over the free-flowing D-major stream of sound, now restricted by no more hindrances, stretches the nature theme, transfigured into major, as a radiant arc. What could remain to be said?

Mahler does not stop here. He only pauses in order to now create, with the most expansive force, the dome for his symphonic edifice. He is not content with leading the themes to their end, as if the thematic events are not at all the aim of his symphony, but only the means to the end of architectonic design. The constructive drive is always the most important for Mahler the symphonist. He here required, where to this point the thematic narrative had stood in the forefront, an overarching of the whole, laid out in grand proportions, which, comprehending and summarizing all previous appearances from the high, newly won standpoint, only now gave the Finale and, in a further sense, the symphony, the constructive design that it was due and thus brought the fundamental moving forces to their full impact.

The coda, laid out to an enormous extent, also has a primarily architectonic significance. That which occurs in it thematically is less important in view the immediate sense of these occurrences. It serves much more as the last great release of all the sweeping forces that belong to the work and are enclosed within it. Raised above the detailed conflict that had been brought

by the course to this point, they only serve the grand leading ideas of the whole and unite them into a last upswing that surpasses everything that has gone before. Out of this synthetic determination of the coda, its design emerged as a look backward. It begins with the ground-laying introduction, which carries the seed of the whole within itself, and now leads, over all the changes that were decisive for further development, up to the highest vantage point.

And so the close of the second main section, which slowly pales upon the preparatory D—A dyad without a third, [62] sinks back again into the dawn of the introduction. It now appears not in a somber and unreal D-flat, as in the second section where it only functioned as an image of remembrance. It sounds, as at the beginning of the work, in its natural D minor, pervaded by the awakening fanfares of the horns and clarinets, to which is added the falling triplet motive, interjected by muted trumpets, calling over from the world of the Finale. The cuckoo call, the trilling motive, and other bird voices symbolize the untroubled nature that is far from all storms. There now sounds in the cellos, continued by the violins, the longing human voice, the song theme of the Finale:



[Example 1-83: cellos, m. 443; first violins, mm. 444-447]

From F it leads to a cadence in D-flat and then turns further, as if unsatisfied, toward G-flat, recitative-like, over a stationary pedal point on C. Now the rising chromatic bass motive stirs, spanned above by the nature theme. The cuckoo call rings out again, and into it sounds from the

bassoon the main theme of the first movement, supplemented by the bird call of the flute:



[Example 1-84: clarinet, m. 453; bassoon, mm. 453-454; flute, mm. 454-455]

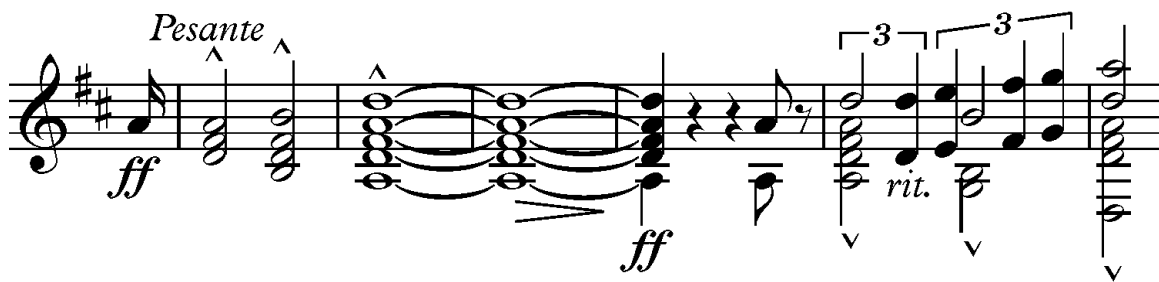
Yet these appearances from a sunken world filled with harmless, joyful feeling quickly sink away. The song theme of the Finale, grown from overcoming the storms of passion, carrying the fully formed, most highly blossomed beauty, peace, and comfort within itself, an ideal appearance of steadfast, mature strength with the melancholy overtone of experienced, unforgotten pain, now retains the lead. From a dreamy meditation, it lifts itself to a new, enthusiastic intensification, only then, unsatisfied, as if with a sighing question, to quietly fade away on the unresolved D of the flutes over the pedal point C. The harmony has unnoticeably changed to minor. Into the second lyrical closing mood, the violently jerking opening motive of the Finale suddenly sounds in the violas in rhythmic diminution:



[Example 1-85: violas, mm. 519-520]

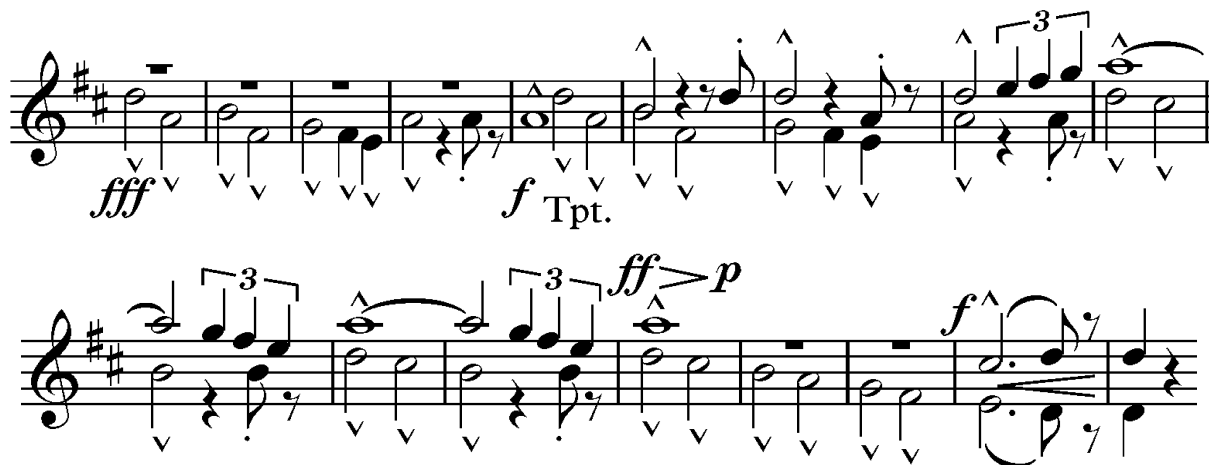
It slows down, becoming quieter. Over the continuing roll of the pedal point C in the timpani, a ghostly image now develops. The Finale motive, in a fugal *pianissimo* from the strings, rising up with rhythmic sharpness and growing strength, struggles again toward the heights. A spectral

play on startling memories of past battles grows to a terrible clarity and invokes the F-minor crisis of the first movement with its futile D-flat-major fanfares from muted trumpets, with its oppressive demonic forces that crave power, and also—with its liberating breakthrough of shattering A-major winds, with its radiant fanfares of victory. These now do not flow as before into the nature theme that appeared as a promise. Now it is the threatening motive itself which, in a newly won reality, reaches up to bright major sounds, proclaims the unassailable triumph of the forces of light in solemn harmonies, and broadens itself into a hymn pervaded by the sound of fanfares:



[Example 1-86: trumpets and trombones, mm. 630-636; horns, mm. 635-636]

And while strings, woodwinds, trumpets, and trombones further conduct this hymn with the highest sweep, the strengthened horn choir intones [63] the nature theme. Growing into a chorale of life, the creative symbol of the work resounds above the full orchestra and leads, its sound entwined by the upward striving countersubject into a unifying embrace, to the solemn, jubilant close:



[Example 1-87: horns and trumpets, mm. 679-695 (without 3rd and 4th trumpet parts from m. 691)]

A debut work. One stands in amazement when faced with this fact, incapable of comprehending it in any other way than as the proclamation of a creative genius. While only gifted for one area of creation, and therefore perhaps not evolved unto the diversity of a Beethoven, Mahler at once makes this area his own like no one before him. One sees well the paths upon which he has gone so that he could approach his goals. One can sense his groping for a path when one learns that a fifth movement was originally present, an Andante inserted between the opening movement and the Scherzo, which was subsequently destroyed.²⁰ One sees that, particularly in the type of wide-reaching structural design, connections exist to predecessors, especially to Bruckner. But when one also acknowledges all the stimuli received from others in their full significance, they hardly come into consideration in comparison to the creative accomplishment that is signified by this score. And when, in regard to the design, allusions can still be demonstrated, such as every master uses them—in regard to the melodic character, Mahler stands here without any model. His themes are directly drawn from the

primary source of melodic creation, with a boldness and lack of inhibition in feeling, as could only belong to a great one. This completely original type of melodic creation, emphasizing the songlike elements of thematic formation, corresponds to the layout of the individual parts. The character types in all four movements of this symphony could only be drafted by an artist who carried an undiscovered world within himself. The youthful freshness, cheerful leisureliness, and naïve joy of the senses in the first, the forceful earthiness of the second, trembling with demonic wildness, the eerie, shadowy melancholy of the third with the dreamlike vision of the G-major portion, and finally the monumental architecture of the Finale, leading from restless whipped up passion to hymnal transfiguration—these are appearances in the symphonic literature with which a new history of this artistic genre begins. It is tempting to give the work, which reflects a poetic development in such unmistakable clarity, a detailed programmatic interpretation. One could incline to this all the more, as Mahler used a melody from his *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* not only in the middle section of the third, but also in the first movement. It is the second of the cycle, “Ging heut morgen übers Feld,” and it contains almost the entire thematic material of the first movement with the exception of the introduction.²¹ The funeral march-like motion in fourths from the basses in the third movement is also found to be quite similar to the passage in the last piece of the song cycle that is set to these words: [64]

Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller Nacht,
 Wohl über die dunkle Heide,
 Hat mir niemand Ade gesagt,
 Mein Gesell war Lieb und Leide.

I have gone out in the quiet night,
 Well across the dark heath,
 No one said farewell to me,
 My companions were love and sorrow.

Since the canonic melody of the third movement also goes back to a folk song, the tendency

toward a programmatic interpretation opens up a rich field of activity. It is questionable, however, whether an understanding of the work is thereby facilitated. Those who attentively pursue the paths of Mahler the musician, those who keenly observe the structure, thematic formation, and inner developmental line of the work, will recognize that a particular interpretation can provide in the best case a coarsening of and a conceptual assault on the delicate artistic structure of the work. This is confirmed by Mahler's own "program" which, as it was drafted later on, was not taken into consideration here.²² According to a communication of Schiedermaier, Mahler himself is supposed to have expressed that "absolutely nobody has understood the First Symphony like those who have lived with me."²³ To those, the earlier subtitle of the work, "Titan," was perhaps also comprehensible.²⁴ For us later ones, the deciphering of such inscriptions would have in the best case the attraction of a curiosity. The knowledge of Mahler's experiences at that time cannot be considered as truly enlightening, but rather that which the score says. It identifies Mahler's First Symphony as the artistic formation of a deep feeling in nature. Into this feeling of nature is mixed the reminiscence of an experience that had previously been particularly reflected in the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. A youthful experience of "love and sorrow" ("Lieb und Leide"). For the song cycle, it had been the sole supporting and dynamic element. In the wider frame of the symphony, it works only as a driving force upon which the feeling of nature builds and strengthens itself until it becomes a firm, inalienable possession that defies all storms and conquers them. Out of the confinement of personal tragedy in the song cycle, the symphony leads to a gratifying liberation through a creative life in nature.

NOTES

- 1 Bekker says little about the origins of the First Symphony, in contrast to his more detailed discussions of this aspect of some later works, such as the Third and Fourth. Later in the chapter, he is particularly dismissive of the various programs, relegating the familiar program distributed at the early Hamburg and Weimar performances to the “Anmerkungen” (see p. 830-31). Other than a brief mention of the designation “Titan,” he also does not touch on the colorful history of the work’s title, such as “Symphonic Poem in Two Parts” (Budapest 1889) or “‘Titan’, a Tone Poem in Symphony Form” (Hamburg 1893/Weimar 1894). For detailed investigations of these subjects, see Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1975; Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), pp. 149-61 or Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), pp. 25-32.
- 2 As stated in the first chapter, the German peasant dance, or “Ländler”, will here always be rendered without translation, with the umlaut. The Ländler is a rustic triple-meter dance that features stamping rhythms. It is one of the precursors to the waltz. Schubert made frequent use of the Ländler and wrote several examples for solo piano. Its rhythms are frequently seen in Bruckner’s scherzo movements. It is an important genre throughout Mahler’s oeuvre.
- 3 This is another example of Bekker’s attempt to distance the origin of the symphony from the programs attached to it. His critical stance in this matter is quite at odds with later writers.
- 4 Floros, working from the program and comparisons with Liszt’s *Dante* Symphony, describes this figure as the “inferno triplet” (*The Symphonies*, p. 45). He cites this connection, in part, to justify Mahler’s programmatic description of the Finale as *Dall’ Inferno al Paradiso*. See also note 16 below. Mahler would explicitly return to the Dante theme in the draft for the third movement of the Tenth Symphony, which is titled “Purgatorio.”
- 5 Again, Bekker’s resistance to poetic/programmatic ideas preceding the composition of the symphony is notable.
- 6 The original example, reproduced here, contains an error. The last note in the middle measure (m. 80) should be F-sharp, not G.
- 7 The chord is a French augmented sixth. Bekker’s German designation is “übermäßiger Terzquartakkord,” essentially describing it as an augmented second-inversion (four-three) seventh chord.
- 8 Bekker’s use of this term (“Durchbruch”) in relation to these moments of the first movement and the Finale, constitutes one of his most familiar contributions to Mahler studies. The term and its implications were famously adopted by Adorno (Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [University of Chicago Press, 1992], pp. 4-14) as one of his primary theses. Curiously, while he cites and even quotes Bekker extensively, Adorno does not credit him with this term, although he uses this same moment in the first movement of the First Symphony to introduce the concept. See also James Buhler’s important article on the subject, “‘Breakthrough’ as Critique of Form: The Finale of Mahler’s First Symphony” in *19th Century Music* 20/2 (1996), pp. 125-43.
- 9 In fact, most analyses, for example that of Floros (*The Symphonies*, p. 34), do not assign a second theme to the exposition and do treat the development section as a gradual buildup. If anything, the bird trill (“Tirili”) motive is typically treated as a closing figure. Floros treats the *cantabile* cello theme in the development section as the true secondary theme of the movement. Bekker is certainly correct in questioning an overly pedantic application of sonata form to the piece, and later writers have followed him.

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- 10 This trumpet figure also appears prominently in the main portion, which Bekker really does not note.
- 11 One sentence in the original combining “Here, bright major . . .” and “There, dark minor . . .” For clarity in English, Bekker’s locators “here” and “there” have been reversed.
- 12 Bekker again downplays the program by minimizing this point, not even mentioning that the “old folk song” is typically in a major key. Mahler’s admission that there was a pictorial source for the movement (generally believed to be “The Hunter’s Funeral Procession” by Moritz von Schwind), is also omitted. Floros makes a very strong case for the preexistence of the programmatic idea for this movement in particular in *The Symphonies*, pp. 38-40. He includes references to the highly perceptive review of the Budapest performance by August Beer, the more generic title *A la pompes funébres* provided there, Ferdinand Pfohl’s claim that the title *Totenmarsch in Callots Manier* stems from him, the letter of March 1896 to Max Marschalk in which Mahler stated that the composition preceded the program, but admitted the external inspiration for the third movement, and a revealing conversation with Natalie Bauer-Lechner that makes oblique reference to the pictorial source. Mitchell includes a reproduction of the Schwind woodcut in *The Wunderhorn Years*, but casts some doubt on whether it actually is the illustration in question (pp. 236-37).
- 13 Adorno notably describes this melody set against the canon as the “first specifically Mahlerian counterpoint” (*Mahler*, p. 113).
- 14 Bekker’s persistent resistance to programmatic interpretation of this symphony now manifests itself in this explanation of the use of preexisting song melodies.
- 15 Most commentators do label Bekker’s enormous “coda” as a recapitulation with reversed order of themes, but his perception is not unjustified. As Mitchell illustrates in detail (*The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 205-9), the evidence of the earliest manuscript source reveals that Mahler initially intended to recapitulate the entire first theme complex with introduction after the conclusion of the reminiscence of the first movement at m. 428 (with which Bekker begins his “coda”) and the F-major reprise of the second, lyrical theme, but later cut it, replacing it with the familiar unison viola re-transition at m. 519, leading to an abbreviated statement of the main F-minor material. Bekker, like many other commentators, notes that the movement could have easily ended before the reminiscence of the first movement, with a brief coda appended around m. 411. In view of this consideration, along with Mahler’s decision to abbreviate the reprise of the F-minor material, labeling the remaining 300 measures as a “coda” does make logical sense. Buhler states that Bekker’s designation of this entire closing portion as a coda is a “strange, if still provocative solution” to the problem of the first appearance of the chorale, and that he “cannot both do justice to the first arrival of the chorale and assimilate it to conventional descriptions of sonata form” (“Breakthrough’ as Critique of Form,” pp. 125-26).
- 16 This is the minor-key version of the Lisztian “Cross symbol,” which Floros uses, along with the “inferno triplets,” to give credence to the programmatic description (*Dall’ Inferno al Paradiso*) of the Finale. See *The Symphonies*, pp. 46-47 and note 4 above.
- 17 This is the longest example in the entire book, its length justified by Bekker in the passage that follows.
- 18 Here the major-key, or “paradise” version of the Cross symbol.
- 19 Bekker here indicates only “Luftpause” with dashes. I expand this for the sake of an English explanation of the term and an easier syntactic flow.

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- 20 Or so Bekker reasonably thought. The so-called “Blumine” movement survived and is occasionally performed today, both in reconstructions of the original version of the First and as an isolated piece. It was only rediscovered in 1966 by Donald Mitchell in the earliest manuscript, which had recently resurfaced. Mitchell effectively demonstrated that the “Blumine” movement was in fact taken from an earlier lost work of Mahler, the incidental music for Scheffel’s *Der Trompeter von Säckingen*. Mitchell also chronicles early performances and offers other insights into why Mahler included and then discarded the movement. See *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 217-24.
- 21 It is curious that Bekker mentions the song source for the first movement material here, almost as an afterthought, rather than in the discussion of the movement itself. Downplaying this in such a manner fits with his discussion of the use of song melodies in the third movement, as mentioned in note 14 above.
- 22 Here Bekker finally provides his justification for ignoring the program. He takes the “after-the-fact” presentation of the program at face value.
- 23 The most accessible early source for this statement is Ludwig Schiedermair’s commentary on the symphony in the *Meisterführer*, No. 10 (“Mahlers Symphonien”), published by Schlesinger (Berlin) in 1910. The volume includes commentaries on the first eight symphonies, to which Schiedermair contributed those on the First and the Third. The statement is found on p. 27. It is cited by Bekker in his bibliography and is surely one of the “preparatory works” he mentions in the Foreword. The analyses in the *Meisterführer* are much briefer than Bekker’s, and because the volume was a collaborative effort, it does not provide a complete overview as Bekker does. The commentaries include musical examples, and could be described as elevated program notes.
- 24 This is the only reference to the title in Bekker’s entire chapter. Naturally, he makes no connection to the novel by Jean Paul or to the other apparent references to the author in the Hamburg/Weimar program. This is not to say that he was necessarily unaware of the connection. Perhaps he is hinting at it in his reference to the Schiedermair statement. As Mitchell states in his excellent discussion of the matter, “the supposed link between the novel and the symphony’s title was affirmed by many of those who were close to Mahler or close to his circle,” including Alma Mahler and Bruno Walter. See Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 225-35 at p. 226. Mitchell also quotes an article by Robert Holtzmann in this context that makes reference to the Schiedermair statement (pp. 225-26).

[65]

FIRST CYCLE:
THE WUNDERHORN SYMPHONIES

[66 blank]

[67]

SECOND SYMPHONY

[68 blank]

[69] **Mahler** had begun with the conventional four-movement sonata construction of the symphony. Yet this beginning already showed the internal shift of weight. The first movement shrunk to a prelude in both significance and scope, and the “preluding” sense obtained a decisive emphasis through the introduction, which is overpowering in relation to the lively main portion. The second movement, connected to the first in both concept and mood, remained a rising supplement, and the third became an intermezzo with an intensification of the tragic undertone, which to that point was only implied with restraint. The Finale brought linkage and closure of the motivic ring, a summation and release of all developmental forces in the preceding portions. The symphonic organism stood outwardly complete in magnificent unity. The labor and the struggle, however, spoke from the mighty Finale. Its architectonic structure, more piled up than grown, is scarcely able to match the weight of the material and appears to show cracks from the explosive internal force of the idea. The finale problem is overcome, but not solved.

Now the formal clamp opens up. The four-member ring falls apart. The sonata structure, just held together with the most extreme effort in the First Symphony, bursts into pieces in the Second as the expansive force of the musical idea widens the cracks to real boundaries between sections. Individual portions grow to independent movements, and the Finale is split. This is the development from the First to the Second and Third Symphonies.

The design succeeds with surety only in the Third Symphony. There, the final movement is really organically closed within itself without the interference of foreign elements in the movement, the endpoint that releases the strength of the five-movement second part of the work. In the Second Symphony, this assured unity of relentlessly tight internal structure with organic external detachment is still absent. The urgent strain is surely present, but the formal line

crumbles. The Finale begins with the third movement, the Scherzo, leading from it to the “Urlicht” song as the fourth movement, and thereupon closes with the fifth. And even within this last, an overabundance of material is still crammed. As compelling as the motivic unity also works here, the piecemeal nature of the finale, from the return of the Scherzo to the “Caller in the Desert” (“Rufer in der Wüste”), the “Great Roll Call” (“Der große Appell”) and the Resurrection Chorus, nevertheless remains perceptible. The type of the symphonic suite, struck with pure perfection in the Third and in operation up until the Seventh, is established in its essential features with the Second, but still with elements of poetic fantasy mixed in.

The work is called the “Resurrection Symphony” after the closing chorus, which is based on Klopstock’s Resurrection Chorale. Mahler explained the way in which he came to the use of this text in a letter to Artur Seidl that has already been published several times, but should also be shared here because of its importance:¹

“When I conceive a large musical painting, I always come to the point where I must enlist the ‘word’ as the bearer of my musical idea. It must have happened in a similar way with Beethoven in his ‘Ninth’; only that the times then could not yet provide him the suitable materials for the purpose—for the Schiller poem is not essentially able [70] to formulate the unprecedented things that were in his mind . . . For me it was just so with the last movement of my Second Symphony, that I literally searched through the entire world literature, including the Bible, in order to find the redeeming word . . . Deeply significant for the nature of artistic creation is the way that I receive the inspiration for it. At that time, I had already carried for a long time within me the thought of employing the choir for the last movement, and only the worry that this would be perceived as an outward imitation of Beethoven caused me to hesitate again and again. At this time, Bülow died, and I attended his funeral here in Hamburg. The mood in which I sat there and thought of the departed was very much in the spirit of the work that I carried around with me at the time. Then the choir with the organ intoned the Klopstock chorale ‘Aufersteh’n!’ This struck me like a flash of lightning, and everything stood completely clear and obvious before my soul! The creator waits upon this flash—that is the ‘holy inspiration!’ I now had to create in notes what I experienced then. And yet, had I not already carried this work within myself—how could I have experienced it? Yet thousands sat with me in that moment in the church! And thus it always is with me: only when I experience do I ‘compose’—only when I compose do I experience! . . .”

This account of the creative process is important not only as information about the final form of the Finale. Almost more instructive is the insight into Mahler's creative method. The starting point for Mahler is the conception of the whole, not a single inspiration. This only comes with the execution of the various parts. In the first place stands the visionary comprehension of the total picture. Then the creative drive continues through from movement to movement. He knows the direction of the goal, and he builds everything up out of an emotional consciousness of the final idea, but without being able to firmly grasp it or have it before his eyes in its corporeal appearance, as it were. The suspense builds from movement to movement, and the forces build up stronger and stronger—it is extraordinary how Mahler describes this in his letter without meaning to do so. Suddenly, in the last moment, where that which is to be created is already almost inwardly complete in the will of the artist, and he only still awaits the visual realization, the spark leaps up through an external impetus, and the objective is clear.

Here, this objective was the idea of the Resurrection. It had slumbered within Mahler, and had grown during the creation of the preceding movements until Klopstock's words called it into the light. The idea of resurrection stands in opposition to the idea of death, of expiring and passing away. This governs the first movement. Within these contrasts, the basic idea of the work is decided. The concept of death and resurrection, of dying and reawakening, had become alive in Mahler's soul. Perhaps this was due to an experience. We do not know it, and it can also remain foreign to us, for it no longer has anything to do with the work of art that grew out of it. With this symphony, one often speaks of the influential effects of Berlioz. To be sure, the lavish layout, especially of the two outer movements, along with the mighty expansive force of the formal structure, the pushing of individual moods and effects to the utmost limits, and the wild,

untamed, almost intentionally extreme direction of the imagination, may awaken reminiscences of Berlioz. Yet these are more of an external than an internal kind. Where, in Berlioz, the bizarre stands as a willful artistic effect, with Mahler it is the means [71] for an intensity that is raised to the most extreme clarity of expression. The sound itself has no individual value, and its own importance retreats in the face of the ideal purpose. The main difference from Berlioz, however, lies in the type of musical conception. In Berlioz's "Fantastique," which is most likely to be considered as a model, the knowledge of the composer's personal character and the course of the poetic plot is a vital precondition for the understanding of the musical action. This is developed in every detail from the idea that is conceived in a purely literary way. Mahler wipes everything personal and autobiographical from his experience. He removes the literary element, allowing nothing from it to remain except for the two essential words, between which the musical idea freely hovers: Death – Resurrection.²

In the recording of this idea lay the next step beyond the First Symphony that was necessary for Mahler's artistry. If the experience of individual love, while detached from the subjective but yet bound to the particular personality, still rang from this, then its transformation to humanity in general is now realized. The pain of wishing to pass on, which led in the funeral march and Finale of the First Symphony to the crisis of the work, now obtains its own shape, gathering itself into the question of the value and state of this life in general, of the force that is inherent within it beyond the vegetative state of its own presence, of the traces that it leaves behind, of the objective to which it is destined. Thus, Mahler detaches the general from the personal. Man as a creature of nature, subject to the laws of arising and passing away, and man as a spiritual being, immortal, incorruptible, returning through the power of faith and love—these

are the two appearances of the Mahlerian world of ideas in this symphony. In their establishment and comparison lies the advance in relation to the First Symphony. Here, only the creature of nature had spoken, and man had experienced his life within the frame of nature and as a part of it. Now, he rises above this restriction. Faith and love create wings for him, exalting him up above pain and death, carrying him up to the light, to God. The necessity of passing away loses its horror. It is only a preparation, a transition to rising anew. To die is not to be destroyed, but it is to win life, a life in God.

It is not only external: in the weightier scope, the more powerful design, the more certain outline of the whole, as well as in the conceptual structure, the Second Symphony shows an origin from another, higher sphere than the First. The latter carried, even with the ingenious shaping of individual details along with the boldness and independence of the whole, unmistakable signs of youthful turmoil and struggles. The Second displays not only a greater scale in every respect, but it also shows the purified and matured creative spirit. It reaches beyond immediate experience, beyond the pain and tragedy of direct events, and is not so shaken over the destruction of its faith in the goodness and beauty of the world. That which inhibits and destroys is taken from the outset as a given, as inevitable. Now he seeks and finds strength to overcome the earthly things. Not in a speculative manner, and not through religious consolations. A higher view of the forces of nature breaks through. In dying, it sees not downfall, but redesign, rebirth, purification, and transfiguration.

[72] Mahler unambiguously articulated these ideas in the words that he added to Klopstock's chorale. In their moving simplicity, they give his devout faith just as inward an expression as previously the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* had done for the naïve stammering

of love's pain. But while in the First Symphony the texts were not audible, but only echoed musically in themes and melodies of individual movements, Mahler goes a step further in the Second. "When I conceive a large musical painting, I always come to the point where I must enlist the word as the bearer of my musical idea." In the First Symphony, Mahler had not come to that point. He reached it in the Second. Not only in the closing movement with its tremendous final choral buildup, which, despite Mahler's defensiveness, must be taken as a consequence of the Beethovenian model, but already before this, in the fourth movement, in the alto solo "Urlicht." Mahler mentions nothing about any difficulties with the discovery of this text in that letter. Such difficulties, then, were presumably absent. The "Urlicht" belonged to the complete plan of the work from the beginning, and was conceived with it.³ This is also probable, inasmuch as Mahler became acquainted with the poetic collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in the year 1888, the year the First Symphony was completed. Individual poems from it, like the first piece of the *Gesellen* songs, may have been known to him before that. The collection as a whole apparently came into his hand only in 1888. With that, he received stimuli that had a decisive influence upon him up to the year 1900, the point when the Fourth Symphony was completed.⁴

It was certainly not only external attractions of a coincidental nature that drew him to these texts. Their content and style provided the poetic frame for the world view that hovered before him, whose will would bring his music to sound. The straight, square manner of drawing poetic images corresponded to the nature of Mahler's melodies, with their dry, sharply cut contour that always holds to the simplest line. The nature symbolism of the poems, the choice of the symbol that was the closest and most immediately evident, the expression of a deeply moving

recognition of emotions through the imagery of simple, tender allegories from the small joys and pains of natural and human life, all encouraged and supported Mahler's type of musical design, its molding of expression not based upon subjective originality, but upon the inner symbolic strength of the notes in motion. The romantic tone of longing in these poems played in all shades, from the sentimentally tinged love song to dreamy religious mysticism, and thereby incorporated the tones of mischievous and grim humor, along with crude strength and sinister demonic aspects. This tone echoed profoundly within Mahler's being. In the musical manifestations that it awakened slumbered a creative life of such wealth that it could only be hinted and roughly sketched in the concentrated form of the song, and must have almost violently driven the composer to a symphonic expansion.

In the Second Symphony, two *Wunderhorn* songs come to life: the "Fischpredigt des Antonius von Padua" ("Anthony of Padua's Sermon to the Fishes") and "Urlicht" ("Primeval Light"), the latter as an alto solo inserted between the Scherzo and the Finale. The "Fischpredigt" on the other hand is only represented instrumentally, similar to the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* in the First Symphony. From the two purely instrumentally conceived opening movements, [73] Mahler gropes past the suggestive, but not yet conceptually expressive musical language of the "Fischpredigt" Scherzo, through the timid, isolated, searching "Urlicht" solo, to which then, after a renewed variation of the fundamental instrumental ideas, the Resurrection Chorus, rising to hymnal grandeur, is linked: the last, definitive, clarifying resolution.

According to statements of Guido Adler, this symphony occupied Mahler for seven years. It was completed in June 1894, six years after the conclusion of the First Symphony. Therefore,

the creation had already begun during the completion of the First Symphony.⁵ If the creative tension was especially strong with this work, and if it reached even more strongly and deeply into the soul of man, who here achieved “in the ardent pursuit of love” (“in heißem Liebesstreben”) the wings that carried him up “to the light to which no eye has penetrated” (“zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug’ gedrungen”)—then this message did not go forth to humanity in vain. The Second Symphony is, since it has been known, the most successful and most frequently performed work of Mahler.⁶ It claimed this preferred position in relation to the public up until the appearance of the Eighth Symphony. Even the powerful breadth and effect of this work did no harm to the prestige of the C-minor symphony, particularly as the conditions for performance here are easier to fulfill. While both works require, in addition to a fully scored orchestra, a large choir and soloists, the choir in the Second is considerably easier to execute than in the Eighth, and also only comes into use in the closing movement. In addition, compared to the large cadre of soloists in the late work, only two female voices are required for the Second. In purely external matters, the two works hardly come in contact. The material spheres and the intellectual processes are fundamentally different, and the formal design also offers no points of comparison. The C-minor symphony, despite the addition of vocal elements, carries the stamp of an instrumental work that belongs to the followers of Beethoven’s Ninth, while the Eighth is far removed from this model and establishes a new type of instrumental-vocal character.

In both cases, the outer success is based on the substantive appeal of a deeply moving human problem that is portrayed with all means of artistic enhancement. Certainly in relation to the Second, there is no lack of voices which, beyond the effect of the problem expressed, also recognize the specific artistic elements of the creative achievement. Such voices became

particularly loud after the first partial performances of the symphony, at which only the three opening movements were rendered. There exists a letter to the Berlin critic Eichberg that is characteristic of Mahler's attitude to publicity at that time. Mahler thanks him for the observant discussion of the partial performance in cordial and humanly modest words that are carried, however, by the artist's consciousness of his mission.⁷ On the whole, however, it has been the expressive power of this work, conditioned by the placement of the problem, which has paved the way for it with the public at large and assured it a more compliant reception than the First and the following symphonies through the Seventh. The circle of ideas that is awakened by the representation of death and resurrection always exercises a compelling power upon the senses of the listener. Regarding this purely mood-based expressive effect, it is important to make the musical creative forces recognizable that set it in motion, from whose construction and interlocking [74] the illusory structure of the poetic and symphonic action emerges—a *fata morgana* that may initially engage the senses most strongly, but is not the artistic experience itself, rather only its fantastic reflection. The knowledge of this confusion of effect and cause may have influenced Mahler's variable position on attempts at programmatic interpretation and prompted him to later delete the poetic headings that were initially provided.⁸ Thus, the first movement of the C-minor symphony carried, according to tradition, the title "Totenfeier" ("Funeral Rite").⁹ Later, the title was removed, hardly to the detriment of the movement, which thereby was protected from overly arbitrary interpretation. Instead, it turns out that even its musical and formal shape has given rise to the most diverse explications. Among the numerous analyses are hardly any two that do not repeatedly contradict each other in the identification of the compositional structure. Differences of opinion even exist about the most basic element, the

main theme, such that one could almost infer an obscurity of design in light of such contradictions. And yet, upon closer examination, this design appears to be well-ordered and easily surveyed throughout, once one recognizes the nature of the basic musical idea that governs the whole.

The movement is based on the first theme. It appears right at the beginning in the basses under a *tremolo* G from the first violins and violas that is held firm like a pedal point. It is a sixteen-bar structure with an opening that is extended like a run-up, “Allegro maestoso. Mit durchaus ernstem und feierlichem Ausdruck” (“Allegro maestoso. With severe and solemn expression throughout”):

trem.
ff *p*
sf *fff* *sf* *fff* *ff* *accel.* *sf* *f*
mf *immer wuchtig*
ff *ff* *<f*
p subito *f* *p* *f* *p*



[Example 2-1: violins and violas, mm. 1-4 (etc.); cellos and basses, mm. 2-18, with occasional doubling from bassoons, mm. 5, 10-11, 13-15, 18]¹⁰

It is no symphonic theme in the common sense, with songlike, melodizing character and closed periodicity. Rather, it is a theme that, similar to that of Beethoven's Fifth, places a strong motor-like force in the place of rounded thematic individuality, and raises the intensity of this force even more through the monotony of the instrumental and harmonic coloration. Broken down into its components, the theme is divided into three segments. They can be described as prelude, core, and conclusion. The prelude comprises the upward rolling motion of the first four measures. Despite its later return, it is not actually of a thematic character, for it contains no material for development. Its inclusion in the theme results from its significance as a run-up. "In the first measures of the theme, the bass figures are to be executed rapidly, in a violent onslaught . . . The hold in the fourth measure is brief—as if to reach for new strength" ("In den ersten Takten des Themas sind die Baßfiguren schnell in heftigem Ansturm . . . auszuführen. Der Halt im vierten Takt ist kurz—gleichsam ein Ausholen zu neuer Kraft")¹¹ reads a "note for the conductor" ("Anmerkung für den Dirigenten"). The [75] musical function of the bass motion is a lurching leap up, achieved in several approaches, to the first note of the thematic core:



[Example 2-2: bass theme, mm. 5-7 as above, notes only]

This comprises the following two and a half measures and disintegrates in turn into three motives:
first the fall to the lower octave over the dominant:



[Example 2-3: bass theme, m. 5 as above]

Then the march-like fanfare motive:



[Example 2-4: bass theme, mm. 5-6 as above]

Finally, the triplet motive, circling around the tonic in powerfully thrusting rhythms:



[Example 2-5: bass theme, m. 7 as above]

In these three motives, the substance of the first theme is determined, and at the same time, they represent the active force of the entire first movement. In its musical essence, it presents itself as an energetic tension between the octave and fifth of the principal triad, an energetic tension that, introduced by the *tremolo* of the violins and violas, gathers itself in the scale run of the prelude measures and is gradually released again in the jagged rhythms of the ten-and-a-half-measure conclusion. The conclusion brings no new motivic formations. It continues the motives of the thematic core in slowly sinking motion, interrupting the descent several times with the sixteenth

notes of the opening measures, which initially still reach upward and then are swept into the downward motion. The theme, which appears so complex, is therefore based only upon a single elemental and urgent gathering of forces from the fifth and the octave, along with their slow dissolution. The intervals do not appear and are not used here in terms of their harmonic significance, but they are linear points of direction. The theme as a whole presents itself as a linear pulse of motion that vehemently shoots upward, reaches its maximum, heaving strength in the core measures, and then gradually relaxes itself again. At first, an independent harmonic significance is far removed from it. The buzzing *tremolo* G in the violins and violas above the bass line serves only to continually and firmly hold the fifth above the emphatically prominent octave C in the basses. It is a symbol of the unfinished nature of the thematic appearance, which shall only create its harmonic world in the course of the symphonic action.

This harmonic interpretation begins with the repetition of the complete theme that immediately follows. The instrumental outfitting is almost the same as the first statement. Only the second violins take the place of the first with the *tremolo* G, and two horns add a supplementary C, thus firmly retaining the sound of a fifth as the primary substance of the theme. On the other hand, the dynamics are greatly altered. The powerful accentuation and the forceful presentation disappear. In their place is a triple *piano*, interrupted only by brief and weak swellings—a muting that almost sinks into inaudibility, only the echo, as it were, of the first imperative address. To it are now joined new voices, emphasizing the core of the theme, leaving out the prelude and the fading conclusion. Oboes and English horn, rising up in two measures to the octave C with broad, rhythmic strides, intone the thematic core in a version free from the eruptive nature of the first:



[Example 2-6: oboes, English horn, clarinets, mm. 18-25]

[76] Horns, then first trumpet take up the resounding final call, which gradually dissolves into melodic motion:



[Example 2-7: first trumpet, mm. 25-28; violins (with lower octave doubling in seconds), mm. 28-33]

Unfolding like a march, it leads, in downward plunging dotted rhythms, to a broadly swelling cadence. It ends in the fanfare call of the trumpets and two of the horns, carried by imperious triplet blows from the trombones and four horns:



[Example 2-8: trumpets, horns, trombones, tuba, bassoons, timpani, mm. 41-42]

With that, the presentation of the first theme is concluded. A transition of Schubertian brevity and simplicity follows. The bass motive:



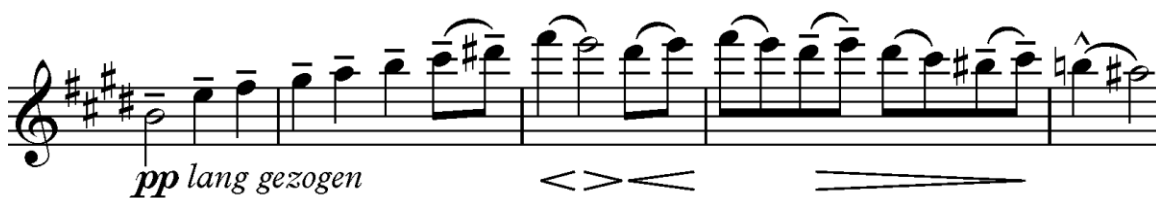
[Example 2-9: bass motive, m. 43, etc.]

covered by a melodic wind voice, moves a half-step lower after a threefold repetition:

A musical notation for Example 2-10, showing a complex melodic line with dynamic markings and articulation. The notation is in the bass clef and includes various dynamic markings such as *ff*, *mf*, *p*, *fp*, and *pp*. It also features articulation marks like accents and slurs. The notation is divided into two systems, each with two staves. The first system shows a melodic line with a half-step lower movement after a threefold repetition. The second system shows a melodic line with a half-step lower movement after a threefold repetition.

[Example 2-10: flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, cellos, basses, mm. 43-47]¹²

With a sudden turn to E major, the second theme appears in long-drawn, soft violin strokes, rising upward, carried harmonically by full chords in the horns, resting upon the continuing *ostinato* of the bass motive:



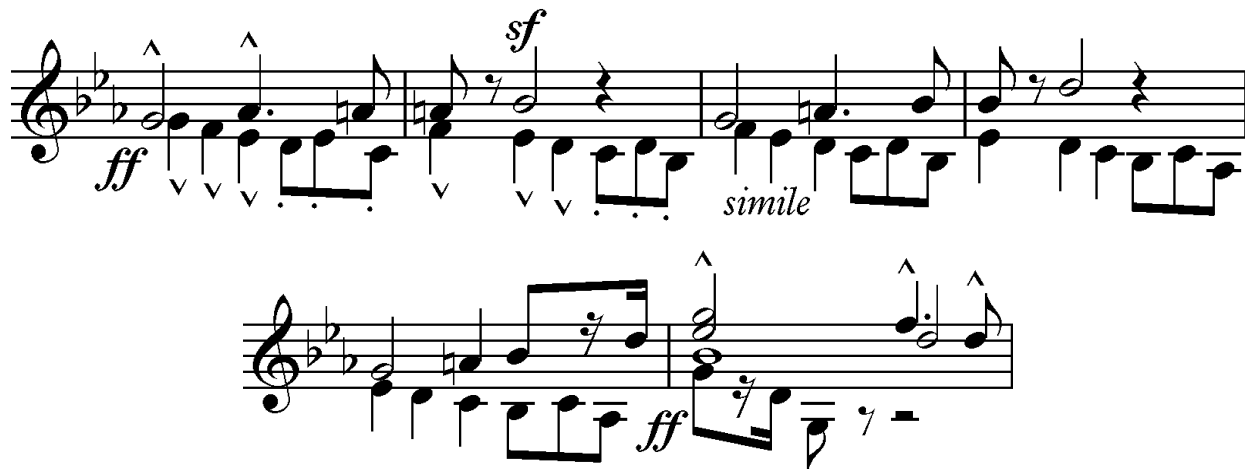
[Example 2-11: first violins (doubled an octave lower by second violins), mm. 48-52]

The visionary impression of this theme is determined dynamically by the change to a tender *pianissimo*, and harmonically by the character of the six-four chord.¹³ The latter is emphasized by the held B in the flutes above. The fifth as the bass and supporting tone sounds in the foreground, and at the turn to B major in the fifth measure, the basses change first to F-sharp and only take hold of the B as a preparation for a transition. It takes place here, just as in the bridge to the second theme before, through a chromatic shift of the basses, this time from B to B-flat as the bass of the six-four chord in E-flat minor. With the entry of E-flat minor, the dreamlike, elegiac mood again turns to one of passionate agitation. The dynamics swell suddenly from *pianissimo* to an excited *fortissimo*. A brief, sharply ripped E-flat-minor chord concludes the idyll, and the held G in trombones and horns, along with the *tremolo* in the strings, prepares the return of the first theme. It is, however, only an apparent return that occurs here.¹⁴ Similar to the opening, it begins with the jerky and stormy bass runs, now starting directly on the third, and then leads to the commencement of the rhythmically abbreviated countermelody in the woodwinds:



[Example 2-12: flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns 1 and 3, mm. 67-70]

A musical score for 'The Swan' by Camille Saint-Saëns. The score is written for a piano and features a dynamic range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte). The melody is in G major and 3/4 time. The piano part consists of a series of chords and arpeggios. The score includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'.



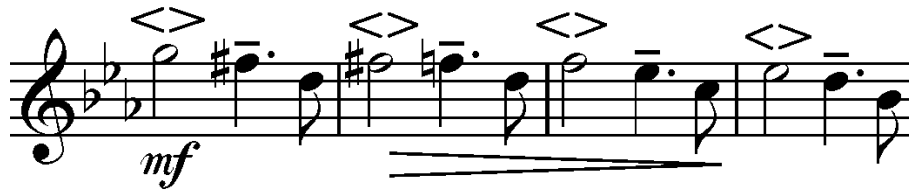
[Example 2-14: trumpets, mm. 80-85; horns, violas, cellos, mm. 80-84; violins, m. 85]¹⁶

Finally, the octave motive of the thematic core joins them, with sharp friction in the first half of the measure between the E-flat major of the winds and the G minor of the strings. The whole, overdrawn, pervaded, and carried by the pedal point G that is held firm in basses, trombones, timpani, and woodwinds, turns in the tenth measure from C minor to G minor, constructs here a cadence that unloads the greatest dynamic force, and then gradually trails off, “calming down” (“beruhigend”), on G. The step motive of the basses contracts chromatically:



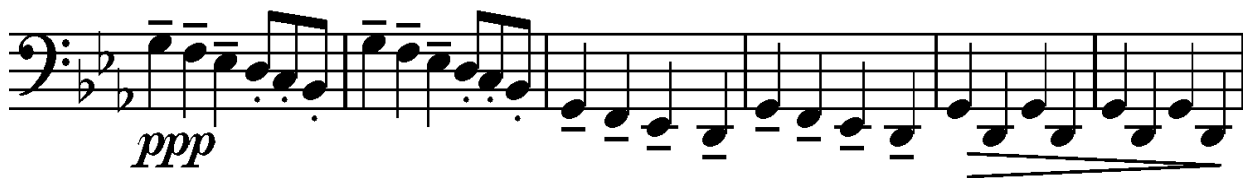
[Example 2-15: cellos, basses, horns, mm. 97-100]

Furthermore, the counter-motive of the horns experiences a similar transformation through inversion when it is taken over by the oboes:



[Example 2-16: oboe 1, mm. 104-107, oboe 2, mm. 104-106]

Ever more “restrained” (“zurückhaltend”), the section quietly finishes with the slowing and augmenting step motive in the harps and basses:



[Example 2-17: basses, mm. 107-108; cellos and basses, two measures from mm. 109-114; harps, two measures from mm. 109-114, mm. 115-116]¹⁷

To this point, three distinctly separate groups can be distinguished. Combined, they correspond to the exposition or main portion of the sonata form. The first group belongs to the presentation of the first theme. It is clearly closed off externally by the C-minor cadence, and separated from the second group of the side themes by a transition of only five measures. This is divided into two sections: the visionary E-major theme of the strings and the heroic A-flat-major of the heavy brass and woodwinds. A brief apparent return of the first theme mediates between the two. As the third, concluding group, the long-spun pedal point G appears with motives from the first theme that here emerge in new shapes. Harmonically, the whole is represented as the sequence minor–major–minor, whereby the major portion alternates between E and A-flat major, the major keys of the upper and lower major thirds from C. [78] It is important for the later

course of the movement that the active thematic strength lies exclusively with the motives of the first theme. Through them, the first culmination at the G-minor turn of the pedal point section is also realized. It is the coda of this portion, so to speak. One could correspondingly describe the thematic transformations that appear here as coda motives, particularly as their use in the further course of the movement is of a similar kind.

In contrast to the motives of the first group, those of the second group lack the active strength. They are images and apparitions, as it were. Their significance lies in their unreality and their visionary character, in comparison to the realistic energy of the first thematic group. A development in the standard sense would contradict their nature. Their continuation can therefore only be of a kind that is based on feelings and propagates the mood, and even for that, elements of the first theme are necessary as forces of motion. This propagation of mood, however, is necessary to establish the contrasting value of the second thematic group. Thus, the exposition, which brought the presentation and general characterization of the thematic elements, is followed by a secondary passage, laid out in similar proportions, whose core is formed by the second thematic group. It begins directly after the pedal point G, “very measured and restrained” (“sehr mäßig und zurückhaltend”), with the string theme that was previously heard in E major. Now it appears, in similar orchestral garb, transposed to C major. The call of a fourth from the first theme, sounding first in F:



[Example 2-18: horns 3-6, mm. 123-126]

then, slowed down, in E:



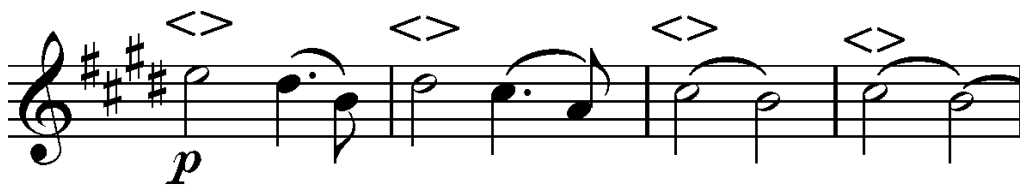
[Example 2-19: trumpets, mm. 127-129]

provides the diversion to E major. In the frame of the basic lyrical and elegiac character of this group, a series of new images emerges. First is the pastoral, rocking song motive of the English horn:



[Example 2-20: English horn, mm. 129-130]¹⁸

It leads to a tender transformation of one of the coda motives:



[Example 2-21: oboe, mm. 131-134]

Following these two preparatory motives is a wistfully sweet song of memory, sounding out in the echo tone of the clarinets:



[Example 2-22: clarinets, mm. 135-143; horns, mm. 138-143]

Harp and horns come in with a quiet contrary motion, and the held sound of the fifth E–B in the strings gives it a delicately shimmering frame. The postlude shifts to E minor with the pastoral motive, now taken over by the strings, and in the basses, the prelude motive of the first theme announces its presence, now in a more subdued form:



[Example 2-23: cellos and basses, mm. 147-150]

It is joined by a lamenting counterpoint in the English horn and bass clarinet: [79]



[Example 2-24: English horn and bass clarinet, mm. 151-161]

Gradually, a buildup intensifies under the more and more urgent effect of the first theme. The coda motive sounds out:



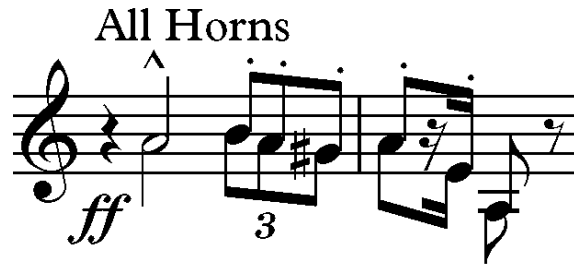
[Example 2-25: horns 1 and 2, mm. 160-161]

It obtains particular energy and strength in its inversion:



[Example 2-26: flutes and violins, mm. 167-168]

One of the core motives of the first theme joins in:



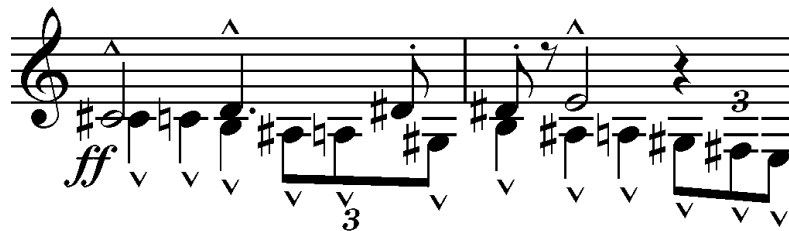
[Example 2-27: horns, mm. 171-172]

In the basses, the motion swells. There appears, as a temporary culmination and promise, the heroic side theme, now transferred from A-flat major into a warm D major:



[Example 2-28: trumpets and horns, mm. 175-176; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 176-178]

But it does not have the strength to assert itself. Its continuation releases the coda motives, which suddenly break out in Tempo primo over a C-sharp that lies firm like a pedal point:



[Example 2-29: horns, trumpets, trombones, violas, cellos, mm. 179-180]

The pressing motive grows to the strongest vehemence. The first wave of intensification over C-sharp rises up to a glaring, passionate scream:



[Example 2-30: horns and trumpets, m. 183; horns 1-4, oboe 3, clarinets 2 and 3, mm. 184-187; all flutes, oboes, and clarinets, mm. 186-187; strings, m. 186]¹⁹

A similar intensification of the coda motive, more sharply and pointedly dissonant, thrusts upward in horns and trombones:



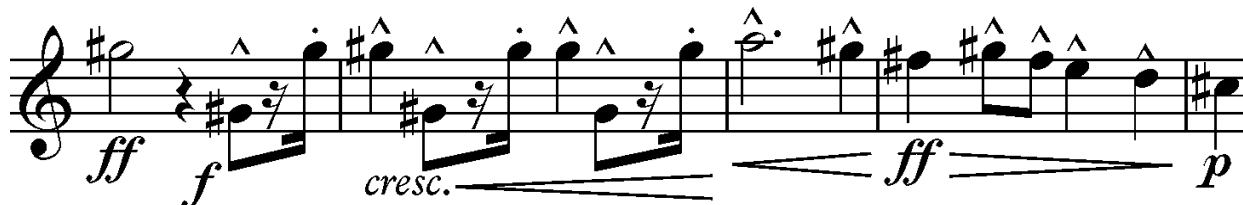
[Example 2-31: bassoons, horns, trombones, mm. 193-194]

It merges into a violent G-minor outburst with a distorted invocation of the octave motive in the strings:



[Example 2-32: piccolo, flutes, violins, m. 198]

and its contrary motion in trumpets and woodwinds:



[Example 2-33: oboes and clarinets, mm. 198-200; trumpets, mm. 198-202; horns 1 and 2, trombone 1, mm. 200-201]

Only with the repeated bass turn from D to C-sharp does the agitation quickly abate. An additional bass step from C-sharp to C brings a calming F-major turn with the first side theme, lightly rising in the flute. It is now spun in transparent, tender sounds and led to B major. A new motive of promise forms out of the coda:



[Example 2-34: horns, trumpets, harps, mm. 225-230; oboes and clarinets, mm. 230-231]²⁰

Without rising dynamically, holding firm to the visionary tone color, it presses forward, march-like, in tempo—an appearance of the light that rises to the heights and there appears to quietly float away while, in the last measures, hollow, warning bass drum beats portend the oncoming return of the first theme.

This secondary passage has occasionally been described without hesitation as a part of

the development or even as the first portion of the development section. Outwardly, one can hardly argue about the justification of such a description. Considering the technical events, it could be pointed out that here [80] the themes of the second group are in fact brought together with motives of the first and are led to new musical formations. If, however, one looks upon the sense of the events, then this entire section reveals itself as an extension of the second thematic group through the opposing effects of motivic segments of the first theme. The purely imaginative and fantastic course of the side themes, their lyrical significance, reaches its full articulation and finds its final confirmation in the dreamily fading, march-like conclusion. The E-major themes at the beginning of this portion, the wistful E-minor song of the English horn, and the radiant D major of the second side theme make up the internal ascent. The following passionate buildup by means of motives of the first theme reflects the contrast of these past images to the present, and the epilogue, in its tender instrumental colors with the B-major march that loses itself in an unfathomable distance, closes this picture of dreams. Into its last sounds, fading away upon a timpani roll of B, the beginning of the first theme suddenly drives in “rapidly” (“schnell”) with brutal force, now, as if to create a stronger counterbalance against the tenderness of the preceding section’s conclusion, in E-flat minor instead of C minor, in unison strings, supported by a long, resounding *fortissimo* E-flat in the winds, to which the fourth below, B-flat, is added in the third measure. In the sixth measure, the triple *forte* suddenly changes to an extreme *pianissimo*. The threatening appearance has vanished again, and the strings, in rustling *tremolos* on the bridge, sink chromatically to the depths. Only in the timpani, the octave motive briefly reverberates, twice more. Then every sound loses itself in an eerie E-flat-minor twilight, “diminished to inaudibility” (“bis zur Unhörbarkeit abnehmen”).²¹ And now, “beginning very

slowly” (“sehr langsam beginnend”), the first theme climbs up from the string basses, newly reconstructed, robbed of its thrusting strength, in *pianissimo* with short, broken, suffocated breaths:



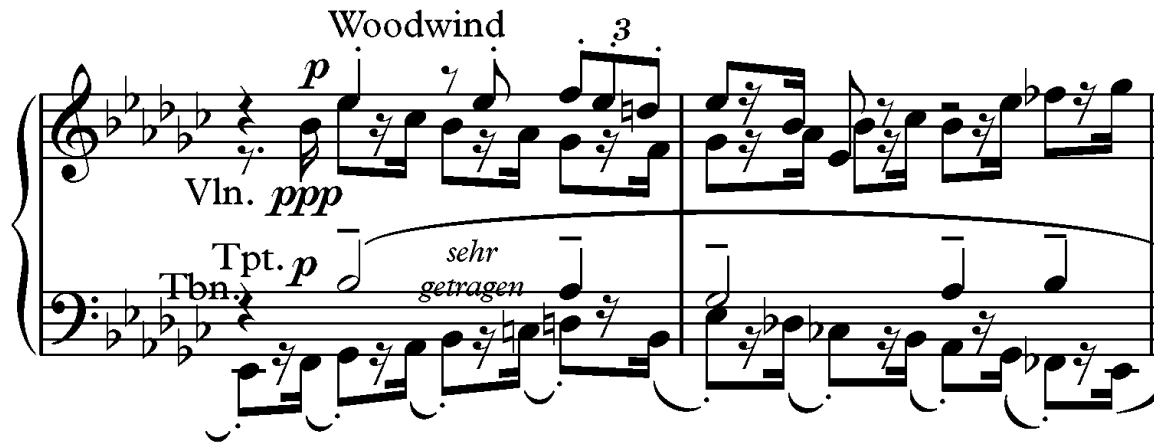
[Example 2-35: cellos and basses, mm. 254-258]

In triple *piano*, violas and violins join in with ghostly *spiccato*. Long-drawn, groaning calls of lament sound out from the English horn:



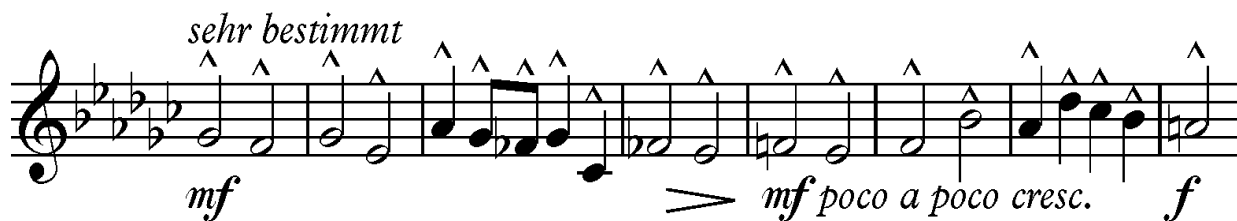
[Example 2-36: English horn, mm. 258-260]

“Very sustained” (“Sehr getragen”), the elegiac melody from the first E-minor developmental section is now intoned, *piano*, from trumpet and trombone in E-flat, while the triplet theme quietly flickers in flute, oboe, and clarinet. A restrained but demonic image, despite, or rather precisely because of the sparse external means that are summoned—of each string group, only half is employed—almost paralyzing in the intensity of the strained forces and the bold style of thematic layering:



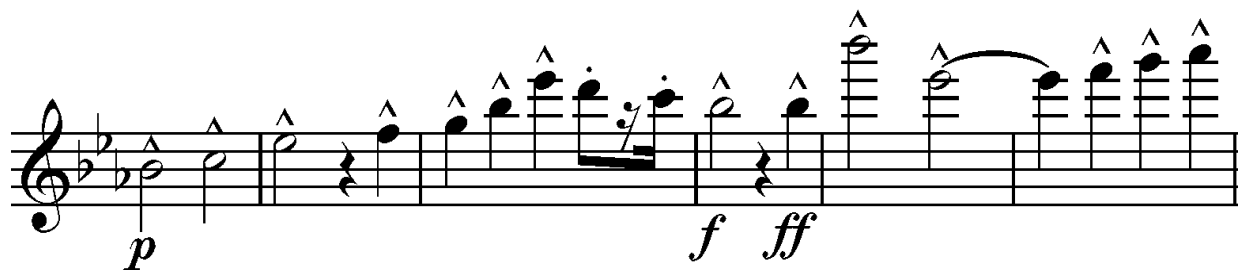
[Example 2-37: flute 1, trumpet 1, trombone 1, first violins, cellos, basses, mm. 262-263]

Into this gloom sounds, “very determinedly” (“*sehr bestimmt*”), a chorale melody from the six horns, entering with medium strength and gradually, powerfully swelling with a striving, ambitious intensification. It is the old “Dies irae” motive in a new transformation:



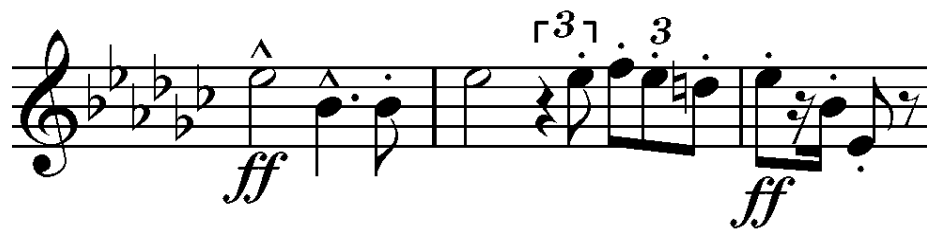
[Example 2-38: horns 1, 2, 5, 6, mm. 270-273, horns 1 and 3, mm. 274-277; oboe and English horn, mm. 276-277]

[81] The tempo tightens up. The dragging bass motion hardens into a mighty, sweeping stroke. Trumpets, horns, and woodwinds belt out the triplet motive in a challenging way, while trombones and trumpets answer with the triumphant third theme. Now, for the first and only time during this movement, follows an additional element that points to the future. The Resurrection motive of the Finale, entering with a powerful octave sweep and pressing on stepwise, unremittingly, appears as an anticipatory annunciation of a sometime triumph:



[Example 2-39: trumpet 1, mm. 282-283, 285-287; trumpet 2, mm. 282-283, 285-286; trumpets 3 and 4, mm. 283-285; trombone 1, mm. 282-284; flutes, piccolos, oboes, clarinets, mm. 283-287]²²

It is only a moment of view at the distant goal. The brief promise now calls the forth the opposition in increased forces. Uncompleted, the message of resurrection breaks off as horns and trumpets blast out the “Dies irae,” *fortissimo*. After a “caesura” (“Zäsur”) that cuts in as if into a convulsive tension, the last, most extreme orchestral storm suddenly breaks out over a pedal point B-flat, *molto più mosso*: horns, muted trumpets and trombones, and later the other winds in harsh, sustained diminished seventh chords like cries for help on A, strings in quivering *tremolos*, trumpets blaring with bells raised up, timpani hammering in massive triplets. It is an image of destruction with devastating power, and yet only the accumulation of the demonic forces that now break out in long resounding E-flat minor: the main theme, intoned by four trumpets with octave doubling



[Example 2-40: trumpets, mm. 304-306],

strings striking the tones of the E-flat-minor chord with the bow as if in exaggerated agitation, horns and harps alternating from the tonic to the dominant in mighty, bell-like quarter-note rhythms, high tam-tam and bass drum rolling, low tam-tam hollowly beating. The theme reaches its utmost explosive intensification. It continues in the rhythm of the march:



[Example 2-41: flutes, oboes, clarinets, violins, mm. 307-309; violas, mm. 308-309]

It rises ever more urgently, gradually drawing the full string and woodwind choirs into huge dotted-rhythm unison:



[Example 2-42: piccolos, flutes, oboes, clarinets, violins, mm. 310-312]

In a giant, chromatic crash it falls down to a pedal point G. Here the jerky, forceful pedal point motive of the previous sections stirs again:

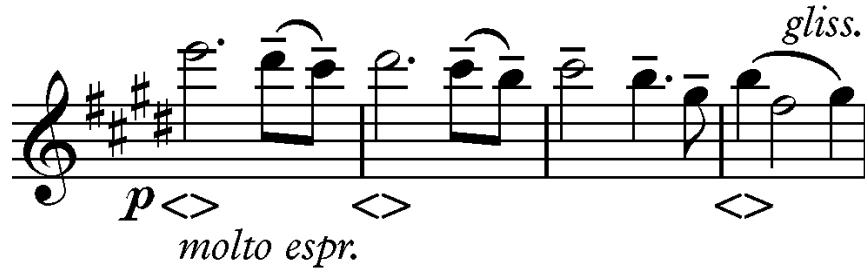


[Example 2-43: horns, trumpets, trombones 1 and 2, mm. 320-323]

With a rapidly swelling gathering of rhythmic and harmonic forces, it leads back to *Tempo primo*, to the return of the opening.

It is an architecture of unusually gigantic dimensions and yet very simple in its organization. To the opening group with its presentation of the three main themes along with the closing pedal point, a side group is added. The lyrical second theme determines its layout and its progress. Only then is the motor force of the main theme brought to a resolution. The development, which is turned in the side group to tender E-minor and E-major moods that conclude in transfigured B major, spreads to E-flat minor. The funeral chorale is added as a new poetic and musical moment of intensification, [82] and the darkening elements are drawn together with the strongest force. The climax of the movement is reached in the E-flat-minor outbreak of the full orchestra. The chromatic crash and the rapidly renewed arousal through the pedal point G that follows it complete the inner development.

What follows this development section is, based on its internal events, only a review and an epilogue. The reprise of the main section is condensed to the most extreme brevity, as the first and second theme with their conclusion comprise not more than 60 measures altogether. The impact of the intonation of the first theme can no longer be naturally achieved. It is replaced by the urgency with which the full string choir now takes over the theme in unison. This time, the unity of mood in the second theme is maintained without dispute. Its celestial E-major character obtains an even more delicate expression from a new elegiac closing melody and is spun out, tenderly fading away:



[Example 2-44: violins, mm. 372-375]

Like a distant, fading cradle song they die away in the horn, the major third again alternating quietly with the minor third. As the last sound from this visionary sphere, the E-flat of the *tremolo* violins is heard “until it ceases completely” (“bis zum gänzlichen Aufhören”). Then the coda, Tempo sostenuto, muted to triple *piano* but “heavy” (“schwer”), begins, constructed over a pedal point C that encompasses more than 50 measures.

Again four motives lead: the chromatically sinking stepwise motive of the basses, reminiscent of the First Symphony:



[Example 2-45: harps, cellos, and basses, m. 392, etc.]

The chromatically rising horn motive:



[Example 2-46: horns, mm. 394-395]

The motive of a fourth in the timpani as the basic motive of the whole:



[Example 2-47: timpani, m. 401 (and 402)]

And the ascending song motive of the winds:



[Example 2-48: trumpet 1 and trombone 1, mm. 404-407]

First appearing in trombone and trumpet, it is taken over by the upper voices of the winds with gradually more animated accompanying motion from the other motives. Once more it leads to a strongly swelling intensity of strength, then sinks rapidly back and dissolves into more and more distantly fading melismas. For a brief time, the mood wavers between transfigured C major and gloomy C minor. Tenderly, as if gently swaying in peaceful darkness, the C-major chord sounds *pianissimo* in the winds, while the timpani beat the majestic tonic-dominant triplet and two violin desks throw the delicate gleam of light from the almost inaudibly held G upon the expiring

tableau. Then suddenly, with an outburst of violence, trumpets and oboes incisively move from the major third, E to the minor third, E-flat. The transfiguring image has vanished. Stormily, unison triplets from the full orchestra sweep downward chromatically and fade out upon two hollow beats of C.

Mahler prescribes a “pause of at least five minutes” (“eine Pause von mindestens fünf Minuten”) after this movement. For the listener, it is necessary to allow the lingering echo of the agitated piece, which, with all the passion of its language, is highly concentrated both inwardly and formally, to die away. Here—and also this difference [83] in relation to Berlioz must be noted—despite the tension in the expression, despite the intensity in the depiction and expansion of emotional moods, nothing intentionally extreme in violence or desire can be perceived. The emotional circle of the whole is one of an extraordinary event, not elevated with dramatic emotion, only leaving everything ordinary behind itself through the gravity and solemnity of expression and the peculiarity of the tragic conception. Within this circle, however, violence of every kind is avoided. The buildups emerge from the natural development of the thematic force. While the construction is not strictly schematic, the type of structure is planned in a sonata-like way. At any rate, a difference is perceptible in relation to older symphonic works: this movement is, with all the magnitude and strength of the achievement, with all the boldness of the fresco style in its representation, more an assessment of something that is given, so to speak, than the beginning of a new series of symphonic developments. Contained within itself, it carries no seed for continuation. The single, fleeting reference to the Resurrection motive is only an isolated anticipation and without any consequence. It is not a first movement in the old sense,

from which the following events are unrolled. It is a grandiose prelude, a foundation, and for its completion, it requires something new and different. Hence also Mahler's demand for the pause: to let the first movement inwardly die away as well as to facilitate the adjustment of the listener for the second. Such an adjustment is necessary with respect to the Andante moderato with which Mahler follows the opening movement.²³ It is difficult to properly characterize the opposition of these two pieces. There the fateful C minor – here the idyllic A-flat major. There a common time Allegro maestoso “with severe and solemn expression throughout” (“mit durchaus ernstem und feierlichem Ausdruck”). Here an Andante moderato in dance-like three-eight, “very leisurely, never hurried” (“sehr gemächlich, nie eilen”). There the massive weight of the full orchestra, here the sweetness of the string group, beginning *grazioso*, with additions in the later course of a horn, then the woodwinds, timpani, and four horns, and trumpets and trombones only later still. These are only the external differences. In the first movement, Mahler substitutes, through a more epically portrayed than dramatically experienced presentation, a preparatory type in place of the conventional and dominant opening movement, but without encroaching thereby upon the weight and magnitude of the piece. In the Andante he again inserts, similarly as in the two middle movements of the First, a new kind of contrast into the symphony: the idyll.

The idyll contrasting with the epically descriptive style within the symphony in this way was previously unknown. The idyll not only as understood in terms of content, such as perhaps Beethoven's “Scene at the Brook,” but rather in an aesthetic, formal, and expressive sense. Only the B-flat-major Allegretto from Beethoven's Eighth could be named as an earlier example. What lends Mahler's Andante idyll its particular charm is the inclusion of local Austrian, specifically Viennese tones. They give the old-fashioned dance tune of the minuet an aspect of

moving familiarity and the magic of the past. This was probably the deeper reason for such a combination: the vision of death, the shock of knowing about the destruction of life, awakens the never-expiring joy in being, in the pleasure of love, of cheerfulness, of loveliness in nature. And as this love, this joy, this magic that no kind of tragedy can destroy, [84] has sung itself into the soul of the musician sometime in a distant past, somewhere at a quiet and enclosed playground of cheerful spirits, so does it now sing and dance out from him, invincible in the completely decisive charm within it. It is a song of life in opposition to the song of death, a song of happiness in contrast to the song of pain, a song of the unreal past in contrast to the song of present reality. Thus, it commences with a gracefully teasing upbeat, in the delicately striding minuet step²⁴ of the fivefold divided string group. The low grounding of the double basses only begins in the fifth measure with solemn *pizzicato* eighth notes:



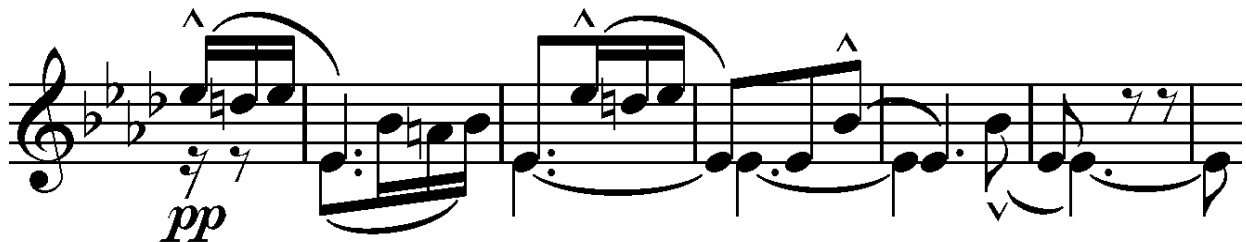
[Example 2-49: first violins, mm. 1-8 with upbeat, basses (with cellos), mm. 5-6]

Out of the bouncing tune, a delicately bowed song line cautiously winds itself and meanders upward, reaching from the cellos to the violas, and then on to the violins:



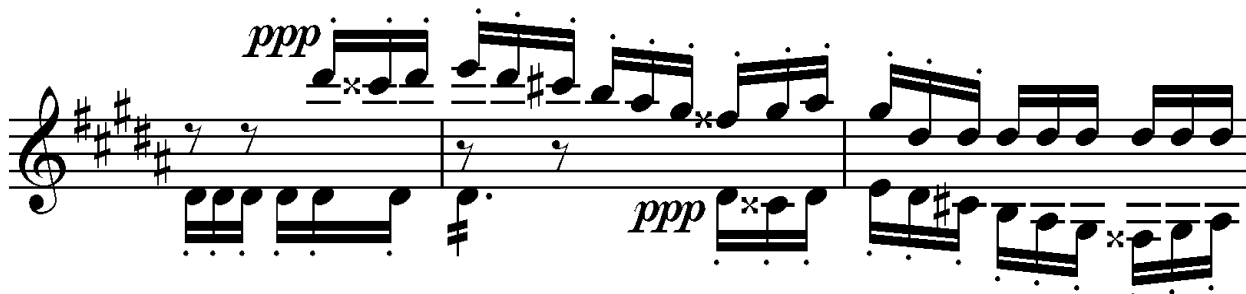
[Example 2-50: top line of cellos, mm. 13-14; violas, m. 15]

With a quietly rocking conclusion, the song comes to an end:



[Example 2-51: violins, mm. 32-38 (without continuing note in second violins, m. 32)]

It appears three times. First in the beginning, inwardly determining the basic mood of this dream movement, simply executed, closing without adornment and without trifling. The two other times display a richer execution, to emphasize the contrast with the episodic interludes. Of these, the first is kept brief. Over the quietly throbbing horn appears, “not hurried, very leisurely” (“nicht eilen, sehr gemächlich), a prancing triplet motive in imitative continuation:



[Example 2-52: horn, mm. 39-40; first violins, mm. 39-41; cellos, mm. 40-41]

A yearning melodic call sounds into the secretive hopping and buzzing of the voices:



[Example 2-53: flute, mm. 44-46]

At first pushed back by the string voices, it later obtains a more definite melodic shape in the woodwinds and sings out:



[Example 2-54: clarinets, mm. 64-67; flutes and oboe, mm. 68-71]

Then it quietly fades again, sinking under in the string motion which, itself now dying away, brings back the leisurely minuet with soft single beats. This time, the muted string orchestra begins with a preparatory rhythmic and harmonic introduction. Then a naïve secondary melody is heard, singing up and out in the cellos:



[Example 2-55: top line of cellos, mm. 92-100]

[85] This time, the execution of the epilogue is also richer melodically. The voices wrap around and into each other like a round dance—all strings are divided into two groups—and the calls of the closing phrase fade away, “dying out” (“ersterbend”). Here, driving in furiously, the triplet motion of the interlude starts for the second time, again assigned to the strings but with the addition of bassoons. The song line, rising up *fortissimo* in horns and woodwinds like a melody yearningly seeking its form, is temporarily taken over by the first violins, turned from major to minor, from minor to major. Now it presses, now it hesitates, shifting through the most varied keys, never reaching a firm conclusion—a poor, searching spirit, driving and driven, incapable of finding that peaceful serenity, that self-contained rest which gives the main portion of this movement its character. In violent closing beats, pressing “forward” (“vorwärts”), the second interlude strives to its conclusion. Melodically, harmonically, and rhythmically unresolved, it turns back to the basic motive, questioning it, dubiously repeating it, first vehemently, then gradually letting up, slowing down, and once again listening to the contrast of that song from the past. For the third and last time, it now starts up, outfitted in a charming *pizzicato*. It quietly gathers the voices to their harmony, and the woodwinds mischievously repeat every other measure, wantonly interrupting the symmetry of the dance scene. Then the *pizzicato* breaks off. The woodwinds take over the dance. The countermelody now streams in broad fullness from the violins, led in octaves, rising ever higher, ever freer, soaring up more cheerfully, indulgently singing itself out in inexhaustible joy. Then a rapid downward slide—the dream of happiness is over.

With the Second Symphony, Mahler had not yet arrived at the division into parts as in the

later works from the Third on. He certainly did sharply separate the first movement from the following ones, such that a noticeable break is created here. He also indicated that the third, fourth, and fifth movements—through the prescription of immediate succession—formally belong together or are even closely connected to each other. Only the second movement stands somewhat lost in the middle, as it were, distinctly separated from the first, and likewise not firmly connected to the third and its followers, and yet, in its tender dreaminess, not weighty enough to be able to count, like the Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony, as a division in itself. The movement that follows next stands close to the Andante inasmuch as, like itself, it has a dance-like character and thus confirms the suite-like nature of this expanded symphonic form. On the other hand, it is also related to the first movement in its essential backward-looking features. Both of the first two movements are images of the past, only different in tone and in the setting of moods. With the movement that follows, the picture changes. Taking the place of that which has become is that which is becoming. An action begins on the foundation of the two opening movements, intensifying and building, drawing new forces of action unto itself and leading in constant progression to the final crisis.²⁵

Corresponding to this change in the temporal character of the representation, the poetic symbolism of the three movements that now follow is more distinctly marked [86] than that of the two preceding ones. This is not only true of the Finale, which in the text of the Resurrection Chorus as well as in the headings of its individual sections, “The Caller in the Wilderness” (“Der Rufer in der Wüste”) and “The Great Roll Call” (“Der große Appell”), contains poetic references. It is also true of the fourth movement, the “Urlicht” (“Primeval Light”). Its words from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, sung by an alto voice, provide the preparation for the Finale and mediate

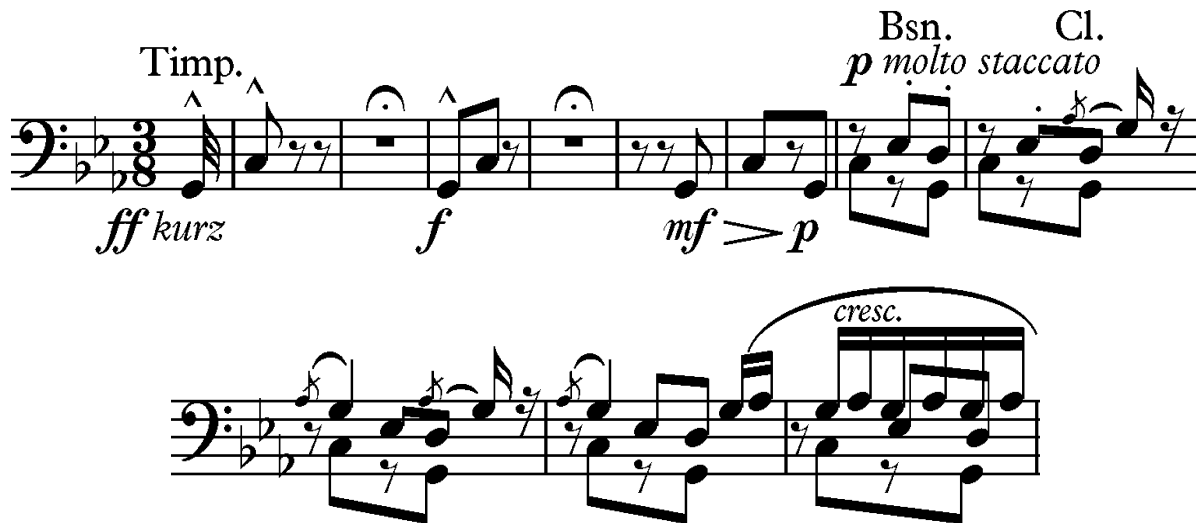
between it and the third movement.²⁶ It is also true, however, of the third movement itself, although it is not elucidated by either text or heading. It is the symphonic, expanded transcription, in free scherzo-rondo form, of a *Wunderhorn* song.²⁷ Stripped of literal meaning by the purely instrumental language, the sense and character of the piece nevertheless remain distinctly marked. It is the “Fischpredigt des Antonius” (“Anthony’s Sermon to the Fishes”), an animal fable full of vicious sarcasm, pessimism framed in humor, and deep contempt for the world and humanity. “Incomparable in meaning and the treatment thereof” (“Unvergleichlich, dem Sinn und der Behandlung nach”) is how Goethe characterizes the poem.²⁸ Anthony, who finds the church empty of people, seeks out the fishes to preach to them. All come swimming, all testify of admiration for the great orator—“kein Predig’ niemalen den Fischen so g’fallen” (“no preaching ever pleased the fishes so much”). Yet this “G’fallen” – “pleasure” – remains the only success. Hardly is the speech over, then all do exactly what they did before:

“Die Hechte bleiben Diebe,
Die Aale viel lieben,
Die Krebs gehn zurücke,
Die Stockfisch bleiben dicke,
Die Karpfen viel fressen,
Die Predigt vergessen,²⁹
Die Predigt hat g’fallen
Sie bleiben wie alle!”

“The pikes remain thieves,
The eels are very amorous,
The crabs go backwards,
The cods remain fat,
The carps eat a lot,
The sermon is forgotten,
The sermon was pleasing,
They remain like everyone else!”

It is a picture of the eternal monotony of life, the uselessness of all pursuits, the futility and emptiness of existence. A bitter mockery of the lonely prophets who descend to humanity to show it the way above. A delightful depiction of the large world in miniature and its incapacity for knowledge.

In rhythm and melody, Mahler gives the movement the character of a *perpetuo mobile*, in color, grotesque and humorous tones. A solo from two timpani begins, rhythmically shifting the dominant and tonic.³⁰ Eighth note after-beats of bassoons, the bass drum and the rute,³¹ and on top of that, buzzing, gurgling accompanying figures of clarinets and English horn, provide a sonic picture of the most elemental caliber:



[Example 2-56: timpani, bassoons, clarinets, mm. 1-11 with upbeat (2nd clarinet omitted last beat of m. 10-m. 11)]

“Very leisurely” (“Sehr gemächlich”), the violins stretch out the theme, which flows in sixteenth-note motion with complacent self-satisfaction:



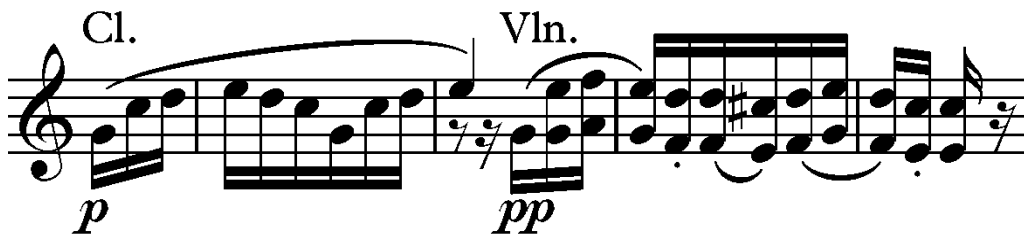
[Example 2-57: first violins, mm. 12-20 (with second violins, mm. 12-13)]

The sequence-like construction is here the agent of a special expressive characteristic. It gives the theme the humorous double effect of vigorous mobility [87] and old-fashioned, somewhat cumbersome portliness. At the epilogue of the flutes, which slides back to the beginning, are obstinate whole-tone progressions in the basses:



[Example 2-58: flutes, violas, cellos, basses, mm. 27-31]

From this basic idea, the thematic thread now spins itself further in unceasing motion. The main motive is held fast, varied part melodically, part harmonically in ever new turns. At first the strings lead while the winds—for now only clarinets and flutes—remain limited to periods of interlude and re-transition. Gradually, dialogue effects develop, such as this one between clarinets and violins:



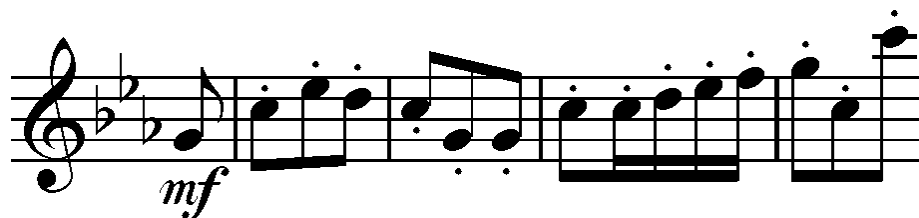
[Example 2-59: clarinet 1, mm. 44-46; violins, mm. 46-48]

The melodic charm of this C-major turn is immediately twisted in the epilogue back into grotesque dissonance by the strident E-flat clarinet:



[Example 2-60: E-flat clarinet, mm. 52-57]

Gradually, a solid thematic eighth-note kernel emerges from the shell of the flowing sixteenth-note *legato*:



[Example 2-61: piccolo, clarinet, bassoon, mm. 67-71]

It gives the swirling figuration a rhythmic backbone and obtains through threefold octave doubling of bassoon, clarinet, and piccolo a special emphasis. Like a popular choral refrain, the continuation of this eighth-note rhythm rings out from the woodwind group:



[Example 2-62: oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, mm. 75-79]³²

The first section, to which these thematic appearances belong, is characterized by the

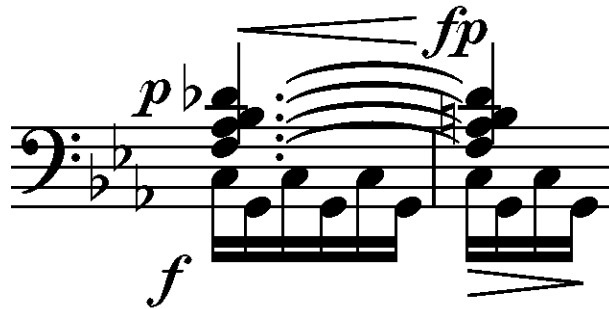
prevalence of the minor mood, into which only isolated major lights are placed. After a sudden chromatic transition, a small F-major episode is inserted, but only as an interlude. The rhythmic motion remains, but it is freed, by a gently rocking accompaniment and rounded *legato* periods of the thematic line, from the fantastic character of the minor-key thematic material, and furthermore adds a songful counterpoint to it in oboe and bassoon:

The image displays a musical score for Example 2-63, consisting of five staves. The first staff features a cello part (Vc.) in bass clef and a viola part (Vla.) in bass clef, both marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff continues the viola part. The third staff shows the second violin part (Vln. II) in treble clef. The fourth staff contains the oboe (Ob.) and bassoon (Bsn.) parts, both in treble clef. The fifth staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The music is characterized by flowing, legato lines with various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor).

[Example 2-63: cellos, mm. 103-104, 111-112; violas, mm. 104-111; second violins, mm. 106-110; oboe and bassoon 1, mm. 112-116; clarinets, mm. 116-120 (without clarinet 2 notes in m. 118)]

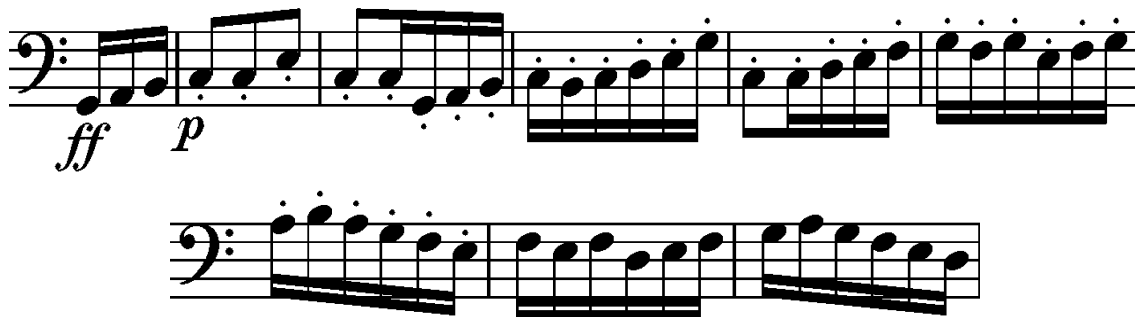
The C-minor main material again follows the songlike middle section, with the orchestration varied by changing the *legato* motion to *staccato*. The dynamics, originally brightening from *piano* to a vigorous *forte*, are now dimmed from *pianissimo* to triple and

quadruple *piano*, partially by eliminating half of the string groups. The acoustic process obtains something mysterious and ghostly that is further strengthened by the *staccato* notes of the strings and the [88] soloistic leading of the woodwinds. Into this almost unnoticeable skittering string motion, the timpani suddenly crash with crude beats of C and G. Cutting in garishly, the swelling minor seventh chord³³ on B-flat sounds with them in stopped trumpets and horns:



[Example 2-64: horns, trumpets, timpani, mm. 188-189]

“Very heavily” (“Sehr wuchtig”), basses and cellos stumble through this dissonant gate with the unison theme of the C-major Trio, unaccompanied, covered only by the high C of the flute and piccolo:



[Example 2-65: cellos and basses, mm. 189-197]

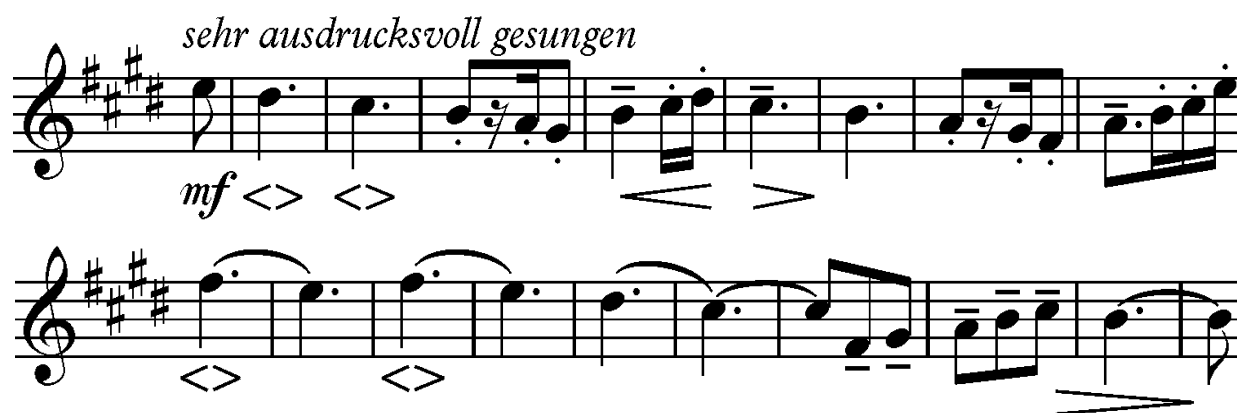
The rhythmic and melodic structure, along with the sequence-like continuation of this theme, clearly point to the fundamental theme of the main section. The refrain-like extension, abruptly

breaking out in D major and almost festively luminous in its fanfare-like shape, also remains in the circle of the main theme, elevating it to a brilliant strength:



[Example 2-66: horns, mm. 211-219; trumpets, mm. 211-215; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 215-219]

After a brief interruption by a restrained, whispering episode from flute and solo violin follows a second upswing, raised up another step to E major. Here, the strength appears to abate. The mischievous willfulness changes suddenly to a singing, sensitive rapture. “Sung very expressively” (“*Sehr ausdrucksvoll gesungen*”), the somewhat sentimental epilogue rings out in the languorous tone of the trumpet:



[Example 2-67: trumpet 1, mm. 271-289]

Both harps play around the melody with broken harmonies, and muted second violins provide a tender inner color. A wistful, shimmering shine is cast over this sonically enchanting episode—

like the afterglow above a landscape that is quickly sinking into darkness. Two times, like a long-echoing farewell, the melody returns again, taken from the trumpet by flute, oboe, and clarinet and then given back to it. In dreamy, fading arabesques, the E major melts away, and the basses rudely start up again with their heavy C-major theme. It entices the themes of the main section to the fore. In increased excitement, assigned to individual instruments in short-breathed phrases, they again come together in the dance of the Rondo opening. The confused mood is gradually clarified, and once again, the peaceful, undulating F-major group adds itself to the minor-key themes. It leads to the fanfare upswing of the Trio, now transposed to a bright C major. But this upswing, despite a strong intensification of power from the full orchestra and a pure C-major luster, does not achieve an undisturbed impact. The string basses do not find the step to the tonic. They persist on the dominant, seeking and digging further chromatically from there, and the more tenaciously the rest of the orchestra appears to hold fast to its C major, the more stubbornly the basses undermine the foundation. A dissonant outbreak of demonic fury brings [89] the conflicting elements to the most extreme opposition of tension and discharge upon a scale that slowly sinks down to C. One more time, the tender Trio epilogue sings out, now transposed from E to C major and from the powerful trumpet to the elegiac violin tone. Then the vision vanishes in a harp *glissando*. Elements of the theme hauntingly appear, searching, scurrying. Completely shrouded in lurid sounds, the Tempo primo of the opening darts forth, submerging, after a brief flare-up, into the darkness of the low C.

The development of this movement can be clearly followed within the truly ingenious design of its formal curve. The initially more benignly blustering, grotesque C-minor humor that, in firm eighth-note rhythms, condenses itself into the refrain-like song melody and takes on

tender, songful aspects in the F-major episode, obtains, at the return of the main section, the first intensification into terrible fantasy. The Trio, rising from C to D major and from there to E major, seeks to displace the image of the restlessly interweaving melee with fanfares of joy. But this joy does not last. It exhausts itself and, wistfully sentimental, its farewell song fades into the newly urgent upward C-minor drive. This now appears, spurred to an increased haste and bustle. The calming episodes are condensed to the greatest brevity, and the returning fanfares of joy in C major are no longer able to exercise their encouraging impact. A subterranean churning leads to the outbreak of boundless disgust, the recognition of the impossibility and incapability of finding a purpose in the appearances of this world. They have become ghosts, and fall back into the darkness from which, in the beginning, called forth by the incantation of the timpani beat, they had crept forth. But now, where this world and that which it offered in vital forces has failed—what now remains?

“The fourth movement follows without any interruption” (“Folgt ohne jede Unterbrechung der vierte Satz”), it says in the score at the close of the Scherzo. This fourth movement gives the answer. It is headed “Urlicht” (“Primeval Light”), and presents a song from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* for a solo alto voice. It is a simple ten-line poem, from which a faith of strange intimacy and tenderness of feeling swells up, hardly pronounced between the lines, and yet touching the heart with poignant strength. The lament begins:

O Röschen rot!
 Der Mensch liegt in größter Not!
 Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein!

O little red rose!
 Mankind lies in the greatest distress!
 Mankind lies in the greatest pain!

Immediately following, in naïve fervor, is the wish “Je lieber möchte ich im Himmel sein.” (“I

would much rather be in heaven.”) With that, the goal is provided and at the same time the answer to the silent closing question of the “Fischpredigt” Scherzo. Here the path leads further. Not in the endless C-minor confusions of the third movement. Rather, beyond them, into a pure, solemn sphere. The singing voice, beginning alone, vaults into it with the sudden step from the closing C of the Scherzo to the D-flat of the song’s opening. “Very solemn, but simple, like a chorale” (“Sehr langsam, aber schlicht choralmäßig”), prescribes Mahler. This is the basic tone of the song, at least its first four lines. Muted strings, almost darkened to inaudibility, accompany the first line in chorale-like half notes. For the wind group, to whom the interlude falls, an opening combination of four horns, three trumpets, [90] bassoon, and contrabassoon is chosen. It is a heavy and solemn tone that, even in *pianissimo*, still radiates a dark and serious grandeur. “For this number, these instruments should be placed side by side, at best in the background of the orchestra” (“Diese Instrumente sollen zu dieser Nummer nebeneinander, am besten im Hintergrunde des Orchesters aufgestellt sein”), prescribes Mahler. They form the organ, as it were. In sublime D-flat major, the mysterious sounds slowly press, as if yearning, an octave higher, then sink again stepwise, in hesitant rhythms that push into each other, back to the opening D-flat in a solemn cadence. The transcendent D-flat major is suddenly exchanged for a lamenting C-sharp minor, the earnest winds are silent, and only strings accompany:



Der Mensch liegt in größter Not! Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein!

[Example 2-68: alto voice, first violins, mm. 14-20]³⁴

The fifth, G-sharp, changes to the searching seventh, A-flat, as the dominant seventh chords push

forward longingly, from B-flat to E-flat and then, as if overflowing, back to A-flat. “Je lieber möcht ich im Himmel sein.” The voice trustfully repeats these words, rising back again to D-flat with melodic heightening. The expressive oboe joins the accompanying strings, almost effusively carrying the closing phrase of the voice up as high as G-flat with a longing melodic turn:

Ob.
molto espr.

<rit.>

Je lie-ber möcht ich im Him-mel sein!

<rit.>

[Example 2-69: voice, mm. 26-30; oboe, mm. 27-35]

In the main key of D-flat major, the first part of the song ends, “dying” (“ersterbend”).

A new orchestral sound introduces the next line: oboe, two horns, and harp strike the B-flat-minor harmonies like delicate bells, and from the clarinet sounds a naïvely trifling, bagpipe-like accompanying motive that repeats itself from measure to measure:

p

3 3 3 3

[Example 2-70: clarinet, mm. 36-37]

The voice narrates in an unpretentious tone: “Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg” (“I came upon a broad path”). Now a melodic life stirs. A solo violin sings:



[Example 2-71: solo violin, mm. 40-43]

“Da kam ein Engelein und wollt mich abweisen” (“Then a young angel came and wanted to turn me away”) is heard from the human voice. The harmony and with it the violin theme changes from B-flat minor to a lovely A major, harps play around the melody in broken A-major chords, and the strings without basses in eighth-note triplets that are muted into near inaudibility. The sadness in the rejection is only expressed in the strange emphasis of the second syllable “Ab—weisen.” Otherwise, this line, a sonic picture of most tender loveliness, carries the character and tone of a childlike fairy tale, almost unaware of the meaning of the words. Only from the next line on does a conscious and lively expression stir. The naïvely objective narrative tone is abandoned. “Passionate, but tender” (“Leidenschaftlich, aber zart”), the presentation sounds forth. The melodic line loses its archaic character, and the harmony obtains a strong tension through the long spun-out dominant seventh chord on C-sharp. The tender motion of the accompanying instruments builds to an excitedly shaking *tremolo* of the second violins and violas. With intimacy, this sounds out [91] twice from the voice, supported by oboe thirds:

Leidenschaftlich aber zart



Ach nein! Ich ließ mich nicht ab - wei - sen! Ach



nein! Ich ließ mich nicht ab - wei - sen!

[Example 2-72: voice, mm. 49-53 (doubled by oboe 1, mm. 49-51), text “Ach nein! Ich ließ mich nicht abweisen!” (“Ah, no! I would not be turned away!”)]

Suddenly, from under the veil of solemn tranquility, the naïve, unselfconscious, hidden, painful longing pours out into an almost passionately urgent outburst:



Ich bin von Gott und will wie-der zu Gott! Der lie - be Gott

[Example 2-73: voice (with doubling from solo violin), mm. 54-57, text “Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott! / Der liebe Gott...” (I am from God and will return again to God! / My dear God...”)]

The consciousness of divine parentage breaks through elementally. The style changes in a moment. In place of the diatonic melodic line steps a conscious increase in chromaticism. The previously long-spun phrases are abbreviated to half-measures full of rhythmic urgency while the harmonies step chromatically in four-three seventh chords. A buildup of moving intensity unfolds in these four measures, until at the *molto ritenuto*, confidence has been won and the basic

key of D-flat major has again been allowed to emerge. Carried by soft string, harp, and woodwind harmonies—the organ-like brass group is no longer used in the second half of the song—the voice sings in a broad melodic arch:

molto rit.
wird mir ein Licht-chen ge-ben, wird leuch-ten_ mir bis in das
pp
rit.
e - wig se - lig Le - ben

[Example 2-74: voice, mm. 58-65, text “...wird mir ein Lichtchen geben, / Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!” (“...will grant me a small light, / Will light my way into eternal, blessed life.”)]

Sweetly sounding violin thirds cover it and then sink, “dying completely away” (“gänzlich ersterbend”), back into the mystical darkness of the beginning.

This movement is the spiritual fulcrum of the whole. Here, the further progress is decided that was placed into question after the third movement. The human voice not only becomes the messenger of the words that point the way to God as the only one that leads mankind out of distress and agony and again to creativity—for God is to be understood as God the creator. The voice also appears in a musical and sonic relationship as the necessary heightening with respect to the instrumental world of sound, as the gatekeeper of that celestial realm of ideas that opens with comfort for the troubles of the first and third movements and must be symbolized by a hitherto unknown representation. The orchestral expression as such steps

back, becoming subordinate to the voice and the word. One could say that the actual orchestra pauses from the close of the third movement on. The voices that support and play about the “Urlicht” in an accompanying manner really do not belong to the symphony orchestra of the three previous movements. They are a group in themselves, only appended in service of the singer. The symphony orchestra silently listens to the message of the song. Only after it has faded does the last storm break out. There follows the confrontation that must bring the annunciation of inalienable divine parentage into opposition with the first three movements: the Finale.

[92] **Similar** to the Finale of the First Symphony, that of the Second already represents itself outwardly as the central movement of the work. The scope is, according to the number of measures, nearly double as great as that of the opening movement. The sonic layout also aims for the extraordinary. All woodwinds are quadrupled and the clarinets, with the addition of two shrill E-flat clarinets, quintupled. The six horns and six trumpets of the main orchestra are joined by four more horns, four trumpets, triangle, cymbals, bass drum and timpani in the distance, and in addition, the main orchestra contains six timpani, served by two players, glockenspiel, bass and snare drums, tam-tams in high and low tuning, along with three bells. In a letter from Berlin of December 1895 to Anna Mildenburg, Mahler described very graphically and with a certain comfortable cheerfulness his efforts at finding the necessary instruments for the bell sounds.³⁵ The letter is characteristic for the care that Mahler devoted to the correct realization of his intentions. It also shows that Mahler did not use special sound effects because of a practical experience with some new instrument, but rather that the idea of the sound was there for him first

and that only later did the question come up about its realization. “I need for my symphony,” he writes, “as you know, at the end of the last movement, bell sounds that can be executed by no musical instrument. Hence, I thought from the outset that only a bell founder could help me. Now, I finally discovered such a founder; to reach his workshop, one must travel about a half an hour by train. It is in the vicinity of Grunewald. I headed off very early in the morning, it had snowed beautifully, and the frost enlivened my somewhat depressed body and spirit, for I had also slept little that night. As I arrived in Zehlendorf—that is what the place is called—and sought my way through firs and spruces completely covered with snow, everything very rural, a lovely church joyously gleaming in the winter sunshine, my heart became full and I saw how free and happy a man suddenly becomes when he comes back again out of the unnatural and restless bustle of the great city into the quiet house of nature . . . After a prolonged search, I discovered the foundry; I was received by a simple old gentleman with fine white hair and beard and such peacefully friendly eyes, that I suddenly felt as if I had been transported to the times of the old master guild. Everything was dear and beautiful to me. I spoke with him, and he was certainly somewhat verbose and slow to me, the impatient one. He showed me glorious bells, among others a great and mighty one that he had cast on order of the German emperor for the new cathedral. The sound was mysterious and powerful. I had thought of something similar for my work. But the times are already long past when only the most costly and the most significant things are good enough to serve a great work of art. So I looked for a few somewhat more modest bells that would nonetheless be sufficient for my purposes, and said goodbye after a stay of about two hours with the dear old one. The way back was again glorious. But now back to the general management: the lobbying was in full force. These faces! These bony people!

Every inch of their faces carried the traces of the self-tormenting egoism that [93] makes all men so unhappy! Always I and I—and never Thou, Thou my brother!”

Similar to the first movement, the weight of the effect in the finale also rests on the strength of the architectonic expression, the ability to sculpt forms with plasticity. While in the first movement, however, the absence of a contrast that forced a confrontation had made possible the organic unrolling of the movement as a closed sequence, it was necessary in the Finale to unite contrasting elements with strong differences in formal and ideological origins. In the first movement, Mahler could hold to the foundation of the sonata type which, with its corresponding expansions, ensured the desirable inner unity. For the Finale, the same form did not come into consideration, at least not in the unity of the opening movement. Here, an imaginative unleashing of the individual form elements needed to be undertaken. The most varied inner contrasts needed to be brought into relationships with each other, transitions between them created, developments set in motion, and buildups constructed. The poetic and intellectual task was determined by the preceding course of ideas. It was necessary to draw the ideal outcome out of the opposition between the devastating instrumental epiphany of the third movement and the vocal promise of the fourth: to arrive at the certainty of fulfillment. Correspondingly, Mahler creates here a special formal structure. Inasmuch as one wishes to hold to certain schematic features, it can likewise be traced back to the sonata plan. In its layout and its development, however, it signifies its own particular poetic expansion of the sonata type. The expansion here is not yet, as for example later in the Finale of the Sixth, achieved by means of musical and organic formal design. This time, besides the choir and the two solo voices that he used for the crowning conclusion, Mahler employed more poetic aids. Without carrying direct programmatic

ties in themselves, they still strongly extend into the programmatic realm. They are the headings: “The Caller in the Desert” (“Der Rufer in der Wüste”) and “The Great Roll Call” (“Der große Appell”). Both point to a vision of a pictorial character. The idea of this picture also exerted a distinct influence on the musical and formal design of the movement. It is the vision of the last day, the destruction of all creations, the resurrection of the spirit, as the choir later expresses in words. For the musical representation of this idea, whose range is strongly conceptual, Mahler chooses the three-stage construction, which he layers in a mighty buildup. The first section, pointing back to the opening movement in its thematic inventory, maintains the character of a massive, striding introduction. In its rich organization as well as in its intellectual tension, it is certainly not preparatory in the conventional sense. As the monumental foundation of the movement’s pyramid, it brings, as it were, the first external circuit around the central idea. Here, the cry of pain from the close of the “Fischpredigt” Scherzo is repeated. Here, the voice of the “Caller in the Desert” resounds. Here, the entourage of the dead, awaiting the rewards for life, gathers around the chorale melody of the “Dies irae” from the first movement. Here, for the first time, the painfully urgent faith theme is heard, which reaches its articulation and fulfillment in the last section.

This preparatory section, which takes up and links the threads backward and forward, [94] is followed by the instrumental confrontation of the basic ideas: the “Dies irae” song that is now reinterpreted as a triumphant march, now broadly deconstructed into the sounds of judgment, the promise theme from the first movement, which had already suggested and anticipated the Resurrection idea there, and the theme of faith. As a fermenting element mixed with the two other themes, it determines the development, drives the conflicting forces to their last gathering,

and then brings the preparatory instrumental announcement to its redemption in a solemn D-flat-major coda. All organic life is led to the end, led to the view of a transfigured hereafter with this all-out instrumental battle. Human strength is exhausted in a solemn, exalted anticipation of the liberation and return of the spirit. With that, the transition to the third section is provided.

It begins with the “Great Roll Call,” the convocation of all from the four corners of the world through the trumpets of judgment. The Resurrection message, proclaimed by the choir, first in mystical awe, then with gradually increasing ecstatic joy, resolves the uncertainty. The comfort of faith, assigned to that urgent third theme of the two preceding sections, obtains a victorious sweep that overcomes all doubt. In an inexhaustible glory whose full magnificence of sound can hardly be grasped, the canticle of the eternal return radiates upward like the sun.³⁶

This is the external, poetic, and formal musical construction of the Finale. One can call the three sections the exposition, development, and coda. But little is gained thereby. The only essential question is whether and to what extent an interaction between the creator and the formal idea has taken place. Such an interaction here can probably only be assumed in relation to details such as the method of developmental design by means of thematic dualism. The whole, on the other hand, in the inner layout as well as the outer construction, is undoubtedly decisively influenced by the poetic basis. It arrives here, beyond the general kind of outfitting in the previous movements, at a consciously programmatic expression. One can view this breakthrough of the programmatic, in its obvious use as cement for the form, as a deficiency. From the standpoint of Mahler’s symphonic art, this deficiency cannot be denied. Mahler resolved other, similar finale problems later in the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies without programmatic aids. If, however, one looks from the Second Symphony not forward, but

backward, the Finale of the Second Symphony shows, held against that of the First, an unusually increased strength of summation, of organic direction to the end, of not only the externally Brucknerian, but rather the internally clarifying solution of the basic symphonic problem.³⁷ What still appears imperfect about this solution in the absolute sense can hardly be weighed against the powerful execution of the design. With all its formal deficiencies and breaks, it is the first grand symphonic Finale that had been written since Beethoven's Ninth, the first that brings to pass within it the organic bond and the final clarification of all the forces evoked in the developmental process of the work.

As captivating as the overall design of the movement is, only a precise examination of the details can lead to a comprehension of the inherent strength within it. Like the "Urlicht," [95] the Finale also follows, according to a prescription in the score, upon the preceding movement "without any interruption" ("ohne jede Unterbrechung").³⁸ The connection is again direct, with an upward-storming scale run. Almost reminiscent of the beginning of the first movement, the string basses enter in triple *forte*. "Wildly driving out in the tempo of the Scherzo" ("Wild herausfahrend im Tempo des Scherzos"), horns, trumpets, and trombones with raised bells, timpani beaten with hard wooden mallets, that furious cry of horror and disgust from the "Fischpredigt" rings out from the full orchestra. It is now intensified even more by a chordal motive intoned by six trumpets and trombones. Abbreviating its opening measures, it continues in a wildly blazing fanfare. Over its fading closing tone of B-flat, the upper voices sink slowly downward stepwise, like falling mist, bridging into pure C major:

mit aufgehobenem Schalltrichter

Tpt. Tbn.

ff *> p* *ff* *ff accel.*

fff Strings

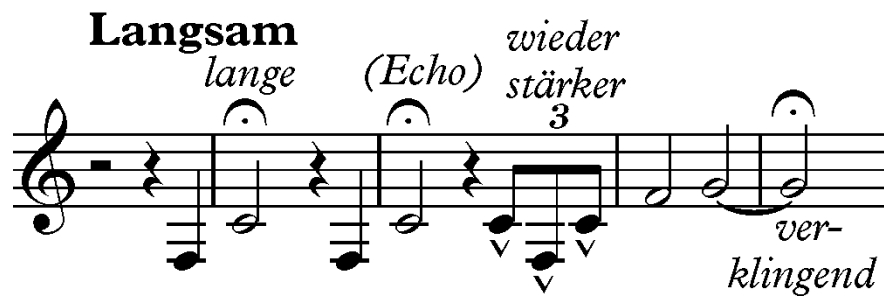
[Example 2-75: trumpets 5 and 6, trombones 1 and 2, mm. 5-11; trombones 3 and 4, mm. 12-13, trumpets 1-4, mm. 12-18; first violins and violas, with doubling from flutes and oboes, mm. 18-25]³⁹

It is the picture of a chaotic turmoil, unbelieving despair in the face of the distant comfort of the “Urlicht” song. But it does not lose itself, as in the Scherzo, in restless, bustling disquiet. The exhausted downward motion is placed in opposition, after a sudden caesura, to a “very restrained” (“sehr zurückhaltend”), solemn C major: powerfully stomping string basses, secretive C–G–C *tremolos* from violins and violas—the third, E, is still absent in the harmony, whereby the complete image obtains a mystical attractiveness—and also bell-like attacks on the tonic and dominant in harps and horns. It gradually consolidates itself in flutes and clarinets into the promise motive, as well as in the horns into the sublimely emotive C-major annunciation:

ppp

[Example 2-76: horns, mm. 31-34]⁴⁰

An anticipatory proclamation that appears as a dream-like image and disappears again in the same way. The low strings on C–G–C continue to sound alone, and they also gradually fall silent. Only the muffled sound of the bass drum quietly rolls on, likewise losing itself into inaudibility. All life expires. There sounds out from a great distance—Mahler prescribes: “Horns in the greatest possible number, blown very strongly and set up in the distance” (“Hörner in möglichst großer Anzahl sehr stark geblasen und in weiter Entfernung aufgestellt”)—the voice of the “Caller in the Desert”:



[Example 2-77: horns, mm. 43-47]

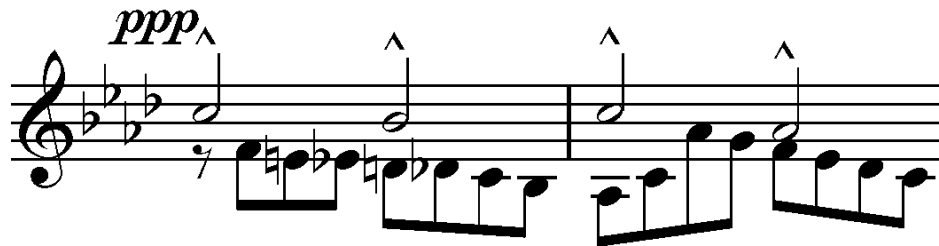
The oboe, harmonically supported by horns, answers with a pastoral triplet motive that awakens memories of the main idea of the first movement:



[Example 2-78: oboe, orchestral horns, mm. 47-49]

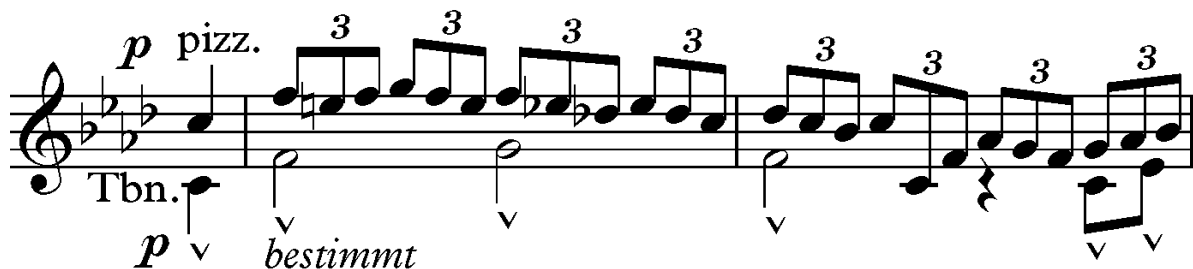
Call and response fade away. From the silence rises “slowly” (“*langsam*”) a solemn, eerie

procession: the chorale melody, the funeral song of the “Dies irae” from the first movement, sounds out in the melodically leading woodwinds. Groping *pizzicato* accompaniment from the strings gives it a ghostly background:



[Example 2-79: flute, oboe, clarinet, violas, mm. 62-63]

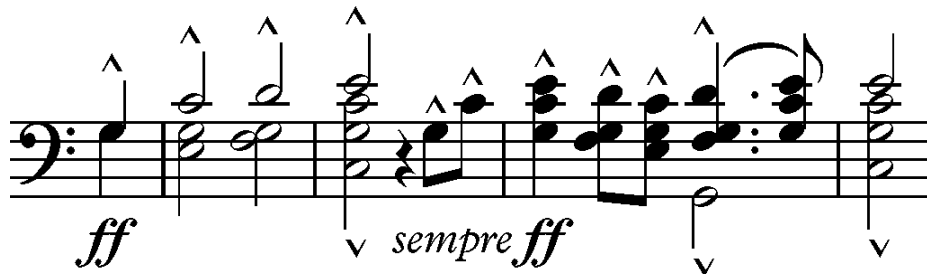
The triumphant epilogue is also not absent, as it had confidently rung out before. Now, clearly recognizable, the theme of the [96] first movement in the triplet ornamentation of the violins is established:



[Example 2-80: trombone, first violins, mm. 69-71]

But this procession also initially receives no more meaning than as a memory. The chorale fades, and the voice of the “caller” resounds again and trails off. A new idea breaks through the stillness: a longingly urgent theme, searching without satisfaction in syncopated notes and harmonic suspensions, with shimmering *tremolos* of the violins spinning above it, supported harmonically only by short *pizzicato* strokes in the basses. Breaking off somewhat timidly, it

ventures a continuation only at the third call, then repeats itself more insistently a step higher. It always spins the questioning, urgent opening motive further, drawing more and more voices to itself, spreading motion, restlessness, and anxiety around itself, stirring from *piano* to a violently trenchant *fortissimo*. “Somewhat urgently” (“Etwas drängend”), “very urgently” (“sehr drängend”), “quite active” (“ziemlich bewegt”), and “forward” (“vorwärts”) read the prescriptions provided by Mahler within brief intervals. Suddenly it breaks off with a long-drawn call of the string basses, and only the timpani roll quietly sounds after it. It also trails off. “Again very broadly” (“Wieder sehr breit”), the “Dies irae” enters in a B-flat-minor *pianissimo* of the lowest wind register: trombones and contrabassoon. It is taken up by trumpets in a rapid buildup and suddenly moves to a triumphal C major with an intense upward surge. It resounds heroically from the trombones:



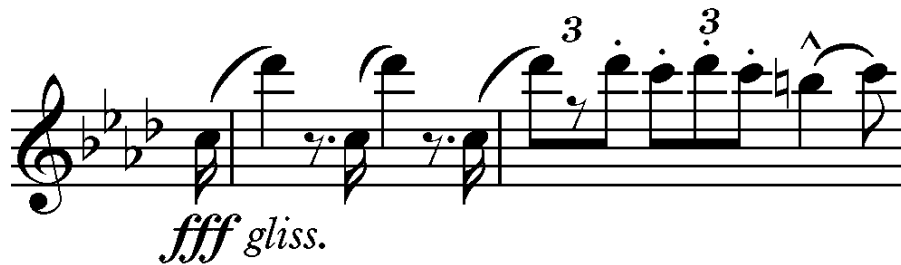
[Example 2-81: trombones and tuba (doubled by cellos, basses, and bassoons), mm. 165-169]

The view has been attained. Not yet achieved, the goal is, however, visible in the distance. Only a temporary vision, for the last battle with the hindering powers still looms, the force from above that brings fulfillment is still absent. The shining light dies out, and *maestoso*, “very restrained” (“sehr zurückhaltend”), the somber fanfare motive from the beginning of the movement appears in a terrifying unison augmentation from all string and wind basses:



[Example 2-82: bassoons, trumpets, trombones, tuba, violas, cellos, basses, mm. 194-195]

A “very sharply rhythmic” (“sehr scharf rhythmisiert”) Allegro energico begins. Flaring, forceful motives in the upper voices:



[Example 2-83: oboe 1, E-flat clarinets, mm. 195-197; piccolos, oboe 2, mm. 195-196]

and the firm march rhythms of the chorale:



[example 2-84: flutes, mm. 210-217; first violins, mm. 210-213; oboes, clarinets, bassoons, mm. 214-217]

unleash a buildup of tremendous excitement. With vehement strength, it pours forth out of the exposition, which closes here, into the second main section of the Finale.

It would not be difficult to find a detailed programmatic interpretation for this section that now follows. There is one that supposedly comes from Mahler himself, which was passed along verbally and shared by Richard Specht.⁴¹ According to it, a deployment of all the dead takes place “in a powerful procession, beggars and the rich, people and kings, the Church Militant (‘ecclesia militans’), the popes. But with all of them there is the same fear and crying and trembling, for none is justified before God. Coming in again and again, as from another world, from the next world, is the great roll call.” It may be that Mahler occasionally said such things. [97] If one wishes, one can assume that it is accurate. The only decisive question is whether the interpretations are required. There are details in this movement that one cannot get over without programmatic bridges. These and the aesthetic ambivalence created by them in certain parts of the symphony have been mentioned. But this development does not belong to them. The expressive power of its language, particularly the strength and plasticity of the rhythmic motion, is so extraordinary that supplemental poetic ideas, even when appropriate, actually only inhibit it. The music speaks for itself far more memorably and vividly to the imagination than the most affectionate commentary. There are actually only two stark contrasts. They are not bound to each other and measured by one another, but rather placed directly next to each other. The first is the motive of the funeral chorale, now transformed into a victorious march theme, “*martellato*”:



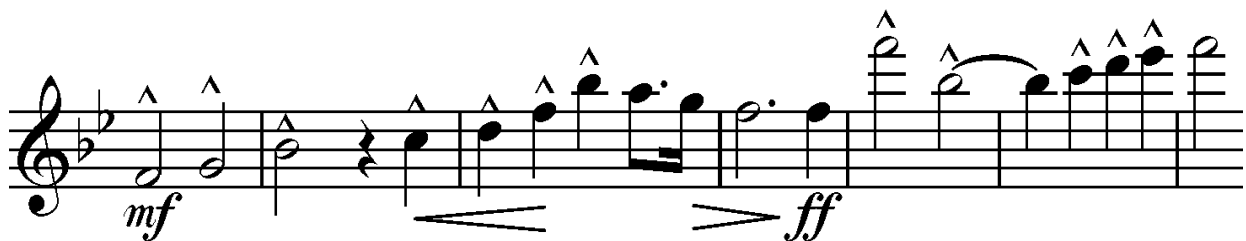
[Example 2-85: violins, top voice of cellos, basses, mm. 220-223]

“Death is swallowed up in victory.” This word of the Bible could characterize the symbolism of such a rearrangement. The Resurrection theme of the trumpets follows it, complementing and confirming it, sounding like a cheerful field fanfare:



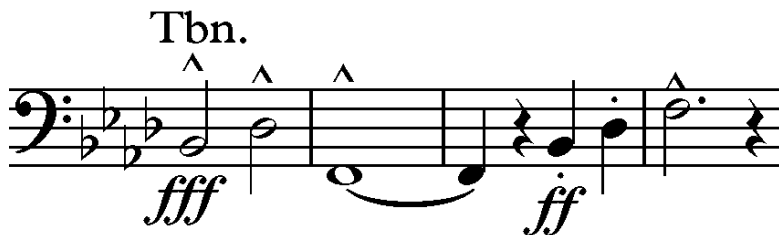
[Example 2-86: trumpets, mm. 229-233]

This heroic, joyful victory procession, almost reminiscent of Liszt’s *Mazeppa*, drives forward in unceasingly swelling, youthfully stamping rhythms, “always urgently” (“immer drängend”), in boldly storming F major. The B-flat-minor turn that enters “at once somewhat more weightily” (“mit einem Male etwas wuchtiger”), which again brings the chorale forward in its original minor sound, gives the march a darker coloration and a firmer step without endangering the fundamentally confident mood. This confidence reaches its highest buildup at the repeated playing of the third theme from the first movement with its promise of the future:



[Example 2-87: trumpets 1 and 2, mm. 301-304; trumpets 5 and 6, flutes, piccolos, oboes, clarinets, mm. 304-307]

The triumph theme, now brightening in full confidence of victory and metallic splendor, leads to the last crisis—for still nothing has happened that would lead beyond it and show a way from the idea of victory in a worldly understanding to overcoming and transfiguration. So once again enters, similar to the opening of the movement and similar to the conclusion of the exposition, but now with a power raised to the utmost level, the threatening theme of terror in trombones in B-flat minor:



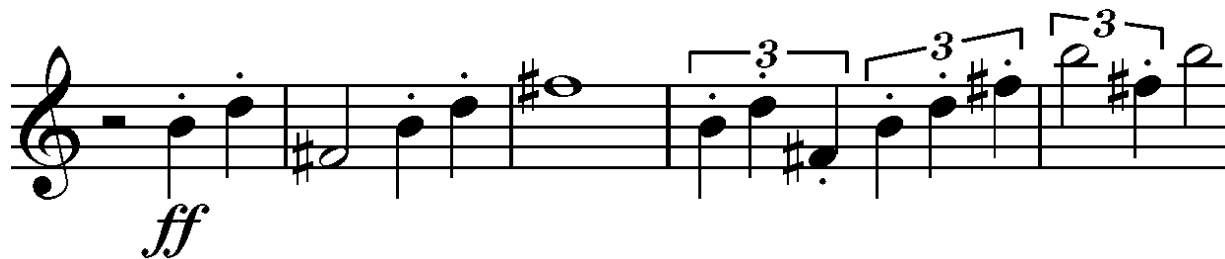
[Example 2-88: trombones, mm. 310-313]

And once more, more urgent, more pleading and searching than before, now follows, assigned to a solo trombone, the faith theme with its fervent cries of longing:



[Example 2-89: trombone, timpani, mm. 326-332; clarinets, mm. 332-334]

Into these sighs ring “sounds of a hardly audible music, carried over individually by the wind” (“vom Wind vereinzelt herübergetragene Klänge einer kaum vernehmbaren Musik”): festive fanfares of the offstage orchestra, trumpets, triangle, and cymbals, breaking off after a few measures, then coming in again “stronger” (“stärker”) and once again “much stronger” (“viel stärker”). It is as if these distant festive sounds and the [98] aspiring theme of faith are wrestling ever more passionately with each other. One increases the other to the greatest intensity up to a *Più mosso* that breaks out with the unrestrained unleashing of the full orchestra over a pedal point C-sharp. The percussion rolls, and the terror motive rings out in all horns and trumpets:



[Example 2-90: horns and trumpets, mm. 402-406]

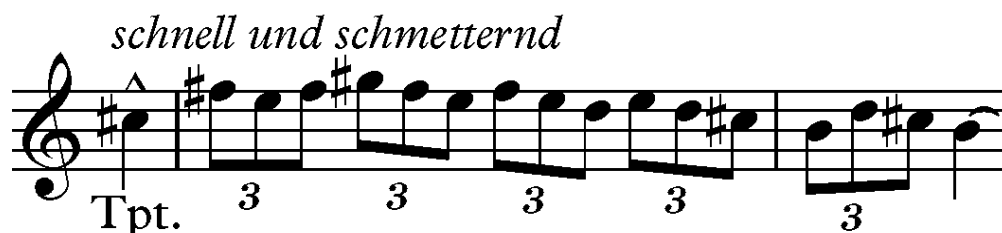
It rises to a fanfare as at the beginning of the movement, this time transposed from B-flat minor to B minor, while in the upper voices—all woodwinds with vibrating flutter tongue, strings in the most violent *tremolo*—that downward sinking whole note scale returns which, in the Scherzo as in the beginning of the Finale, had symbolized the falling of the veil:



[Example 2-91: flutes, piccolos, oboes 3 and 4, first violins, violas, mm. 410-417]

The development has returned to the starting point of the Finale introduction. The vision of transfiguration follows the chaotic revolt as it does there. But now everything is raised up a half-step, the cry transferred from the realistic B-flat minor to B minor, the vision from C major to the solemn and sublime D-flat major. The earthly elements of the battle lose, and the heavenly ones gain in reality. The development that has since been passed through has caused an inner turnabout, and what was once reality has become a dream, and the dream has become truth. The renewal of the spirit has prepared itself, and has become ripe for the last revelation.

The “Great Roll Call” begins. The bass drum rolls hollowly. A long, extended horn call, corresponding to the “Caller in the Desert,” but likewise elevated a half-step, sounds, interrupted by an echo, through the stillness. Four trumpets, sounding from different directions, answer. Their blaring triplets evoke the main theme of the opening movement:



[Example 2-92: offstage trumpet 1, mm. 455-457]

No voice continues. It is still and solitary in the world. Only two gentle bird voices are still heard, “played lightly, like gossamer” (“leicht und duftig gespielt”) by flute and piccolo. After the night of terror, battle, and visionary hope that has just been experienced, they proclaim the dawning morning of the future day. Horn and trumpet sounds lose themselves again in the distance. The bird voices also fall silent. There is a moment of complete silence, the restlessness of feeling, as it were, in anticipation of the one who is coming. That which instrumental language was capable of offering in expressive possibilities has been exhausted in the previous course of the movement. Moving upward does not seem conceivable.

The miracle occurs. Ghostly, “Misterioso,” a mixed choir sounds in a deep, dark vocal register without accompaniment. Sopranos and basses step measure by measure in parallel octaves and in grand naïveté, slowly rising until the intimately tender solo soprano soars like a celestial light above the dark masses. It is a sonic picture of such a shattering power of feeling, penetrating into the deepest part of the soul, as is only revealed, even to the genius, in moments of the highest grace. Certainly, even here one can raise explanations of a physiological kind, can view the acoustic contrast between the massive array in the preceding instrumental passage and the simple harmonies of the choral entrance, toned down to the most extreme tenderness, as the reason for the moving impact. [99] The overwhelming impression is thereby neither diminished

nor disturbed in the least. It remains a fact, and when the artist has understood how to make the purely acoustic effect so fruitful in this way—the better for him and for us.

At first, only two strophic verses to the Resurrection theme, now transformed to a chorale melody, are heard. Separated by a short and solemn orchestral interlude, they are intoned by the choir in G-flat major without external buildup, at first unaccompanied, and the second time with only the outer voices tenderly supported:

ppp *rit.* *tempo* *rit.* *a tempo*

Auf - er - stehn, ja__ auf - er - stehn wirst du, mein

Staub nach kurz-er__ Ruh!__

[Example 2-93: mixed choir, mm. 472-481 (some tenor harmonies omitted, along with bass harmonies from m. 279), text “Aufersteh’n, ja aufersteh’n wirst du, / Mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh!” (“Rise again, yes you will rise again, / My dust, after a brief rest!”)]

Unsterblich Leben
Wird der dich rief, dir geben.
Wieder aufzublüh’n wirst du gesät.
Der Herr der Ernte geht
Und sammelt Garben,
Uns ein, die starben!

Immortal life
Will be given to you by He who called you.
You were sowed that you might bloom again.
The Lord of harvest goes
And gathers up sheaves
For those of us who have died!

Until now, the emotion remains in a united choral worship, mysteriously bound by the

common experience of the great revelation. Now, the single individual breaks free of the masses. The tempo loses solemnity and inflexibility, and the musical structure loses the archaic stepwise motion of the chorale style. The theme of doubt and longing in the Finale appears anew, but now inwardly relieved by the words of former care and anxiety that underlie it. These words, like all that follow written by Mahler himself, are not an interpretation, but rather a supplement to the melody, as it were. In its tones, the emotions had once searched and pressed without satisfaction, and now it is precisely where certainty is revealed:

p (*schlicht*)

O glau - be Cb. pizz. Mein Herz o glau - be:

Es geht dir nichts ver - lo - ren!

[Example 2-94: alto solo (doubled by English horn), mm. 561-572, cellos and basses, mm. 563-564, text “O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube: / Es geht dir nichts verloren!” (“O believe, my heart, o believe: / Nothing is lost to you!”)]

Dein ist, ja dein, was du geseht,

Yours, yes yours is that which you have
desired,

Dean, was du geliebt, was du gestritten.

Yours, what you have loved, for which you
have fought.

Consolidating itself from minor to major, it sounds with intimate certainty:

Innig.

O glau - be du wardst nicht um - sonst_ ge - bor - en!

Hast nicht um - sonst ge - lebt_ ge - lit - ten!

[Example 2-95: soprano solo, mm. 601-611 (doubled by first violins, mm. 602-609, by oboe, mm. 610-611), text “O glaube, du wardst nicht umsonst geboren! / Hast nicht umsonst gelebt, gelitten!” (“O believe, you were not born for nothing! / You did not live and suffer for nothing!”)]

Once more, the mood sinks back into a mysterious darkness:

Was entstanden ist, das muß vergehen,
Was vergangen, auferstehen!

What has arisen must pass away,
What has passed away must rise again!

[100] “Misterioso,” it sounds as if from strange depths:

Hör auf zu beben!
Bereite dich,
Bereite dich, zu leben!

Cease to tremble!
Prepare yourself,
Prepare yourself to live!

“With sweep, but not hurried” (“Mit Aufschwung, aber nicht eilend”), the strength and will of the budding and tremendously growing life breaks through. Struggle and distress have been overcome:

O Schmerz, du Alldurchdringer,
 Dir bin ich entrungen!
 O Tod, du Allbezwinger,
 Nun bist du bezwungen.

O pain, you who penetrate all,
 I have wrested myself from you!
 O death, you who conquer all,
 You have now been conquered.

The new forces gather and intensify:



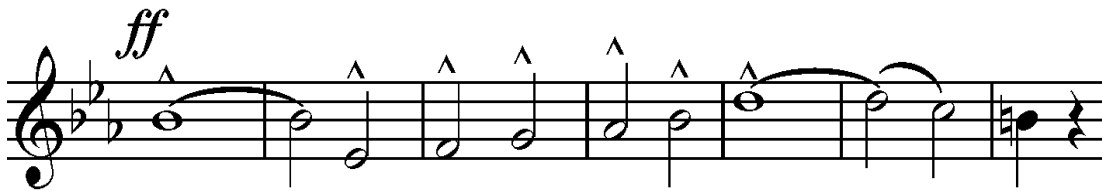
Mit Flü - geln die ich mir er - run - gen, wer - de_ich ent - schwe - ben

[Example 2-96: choral basses, doubled by cellos and string basses, mm. 671-676, text “Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen / Werde ich entschweben,” as below]

Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen
 In heißem Liebesstreben
 Wird' ich entschweben
 Zum Licht, zu der kein Aug' gedrungen!

With wings that I have won for myself
 In the ardent pursuit of love,
 I shall soar above
 To the light to which no eye has penetrated!

The motion becomes ever more elated, free, and filled with light.



Ster - ben werd'ich um zu le - ben!

[Example 2-97: full choir in unison, doubled by all horns, mm. 696-702, text “Sterben werd' ich um zu leben!” (“I shall die that I might live!”)]

it hammers in a mighty vocal unison, then vaults with sun-like glory up to the last, summarizing, jubilant message of the Easter proclamation, which roars above the heads and hearts of mankind

like a sacred storm of spirits:

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,
Mein Herz, in einem Nu!
Was du geschlagen,
Zu Gott wird es dich tragen.

Rise again, yes you will rise again,
My heart, in an instant!
What you have battled through
Will carry you to God.

The song resounds to the spheres. The waves of emotion and of sound rise higher and higher. The sensitivity for individual dynamic and sonic values almost loses itself in this current of most extreme excitement. An incomprehensible convulsion embraces all the senses, making them hardly aware of the roaring of the full organ registration, the ringing of the bells, the resounding of the trumpets of the Judgment Day with the Resurrection melody, hardly aware of this entire, overwhelming image still as sound, carrying it up into a world of experience in which the transient nature of the sound becomes only an allegory in which the deep symbolism of human feeling is revealed.

When Mahler wrote the Second Symphony, he had just completed the third decade of his life. He had become a man, and felt himself a natural creator. He was pressed not only to produce, but also to awaken that which he produced unto life, to make it act and to act himself. The immense complex of creative impulses that were still locked up within his nature became [101] alive in his consciousness. The great riddle of every creative will about the ultimate purpose of its actions needed to be set against this compulsion to create that elementally broke out, against the resistance that it called forth, as a natural repercussion. Other external impressions and experiences may certainly have influenced the choice of the poetic theme.

What was decisive, however, almost certainly lay in Mahler having reached the point of development as a man and artist where he felt compelled to give an account of the sense and purpose of existence, even to test the value of life through the question of the value of creation. It was the crisis through which every actively working person, particularly every creative artist, must go at least once, and upon which his creativity must prove its inner strength.

Mahler overcame the crisis by himself. From the destructive vision of death, from the realization of the distant singularity of earthly pleasure and happiness, from the bitter experience of life's delusion and the weakness of human nature, he struggled through to faith in the immortal and the divine. He studied out the question of the Why into its depths and then, in spite of all intellectual knowledge, answered it with joy in the future. Was it only the Christian idea of the Resurrection, only the mystical promise of faith, which enabled him to such confidence? The verses that Mahler added to Klopstock's chorale stanzas give the answer. They show that the Christian Resurrection idea was for Mahler only a symbol for another, more natural idea: for the doctrine of the return of all things, of the permanence of every force, of the increasing perfection of the individual being, whose "Die and Become"⁴² encloses an eternal creative process within itself, which is represented at its greatest in the life in nature with its inexhaustible blooming, passing away, and newly arising. Thus, the idea of death and resurrection became again for Mahler the source of a new knowledge of nature. Nature is now for him not only, as in the First Symphony, the bringer of comfort and the liberator of experiences and pains of a personal kind. It becomes for him the symbol of the divine, the creative, of eternal rebirth. In its life and death, he recognizes the laws of the life and death of all things, and as long as this force itself remains, the eternal Becoming must also remain, and

creativity can never be lost. This pantheistic view, to which Mahler comes through overcoming the idea of death, sows a new seed into his creation: the conception of the life in nature in all its stages of development as a highly symbolic allegory of creative existence. From this seed blossoms the next great work of Mahler, his Third Symphony. [102 blank]

NOTES

- 1 This extremely familiar and oft-quoted letter (even in Bekker's time, as he indicates) provides the only instance of Bekker setting apart a quotation by indentation in the entire book. The fact that the letter had been previously published may explain why he did this. In similar long quotations of letters, such as the long description of Mahler's visit to the foundry (Note 35 below), Bekker does not indent them or set them apart. The letter is dated February 17, 1897, Hamburg. It is found in its entirety in *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, revised and edited by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), pp. 199-202 (Letter 216). Bekker's source, indicated in the "Anmerkungen" is Seidl's *Modernier Geist in der deutschen Tonkunst*. The translation of the excerpt is my own.
- 2 The word "Vergehen," as opposed to the more generic "Tod," implies a more "active" process of dying, i.e., "passing away." Nonetheless, the English "death" seems the most appropriate choice for this important dichotomy. Bekker's mention of Berlioz here is a path followed by later critics, including Donald Mitchell in *The Wunderhorn Years* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1975; Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), pp. 333-37. While Bekker focuses on the literary and programmatic connections, Mitchell adds the dimension of orchestration to the comparison, including the use of the E-flat clarinet and, most importantly, the employment of an offstage instrument in the duet between oboe and English horn in the *Scène aux champs* movement. Offstage effects were used in opera before Berlioz, but his use of them in a symphony was an innovation. Mahler, of course, uses offstage instruments and groups in the first three symphonies as well as the earlier cantata *Das klagende Lied*.
- 3 Here, Bekker is almost certainly in error. Donald Mitchell provides an exhaustive account and investigation into the long and convoluted genesis of the Second Symphony in *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 161-87. Mitchell concludes that the idea of incorporating "Urlicht" into the symphony was in fact a very late idea, and more than likely arose *after* the conception of the Finale and during its composition. See esp. pp. 184-87.
- 4 What Bekker curiously does *not* mention in this context is that 1888 was the year the first orchestral score of "Totenfeier," the first version of the first movement, was completed. The composition of most of the *Wunderhorn* songs is now thought to have been around 1891-93, the same time he returned to what would become the Second Symphony after a hiatus from composing in general. See Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 165-68, also Edward R. Reilly, "Totenfeier and the Second Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell & Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 84-87.
- 5 As is now commonly understood, only the "Totenfeier" version of the first movement can be linked to the time of the First Symphony's completion in its first version.
- 6 This is definitely no longer true. The First and Fourth are far more frequently performed today than any other Mahler symphonies. On the early popularity and performance history of the Second Symphony, see Reilly, "Totenfeier and the Second Symphony," pp. 89-90.
- 7 This letter is No. 138 in *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 120-21. Bekker states in the "Anmerkungen" that it was "in his possession."
- 8 Bekker's references to the "programmatic interpretation" of the Second Symphony are even more perfunctory than those in relation to the First Symphony, where he at least provides the Hamburg/Weimar program in the "Anmerkungen." There are in fact three authentic programs provided by Mahler for the symphony, the first as reported by Natalie Bauer-Lechner from January 1896, the second in a letter from Mahler to Max Marschalk

dated March 26, 1896, and the third written for a Dresden performance on December 29, 1901. Reilly conveniently reproduces translations of all three in “*Totenfeier* and the Second Symphony,” pp. 123-25. Bekker was aware of at least one of these (see note 41 below). The “poetic headings initially provided” are presumably those in the manuscript of the Finale, “*Der Rufer in der Wüste*” and “*Der große Appell*,” discussed later on by Bekker.

- 9 A striking oversimplification by Bekker. Mitchell provides a thorough background of the movement’s origin, initially planned as the opening movement to a projected symphony and, for a time, as an independent symphonic poem with the title *Totenfeier*. See *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 161-65. The composition of the movement in its original form is also the subject of Stephen E. Hefling’s dissertation, “The Making of Mahler’s ‘Totenfeier’: A Documentary and Analytical Study” (Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1985). The highly speculative connection to the poem *Dziady* by the great Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, translated by Mahler’s friend Siegfried Lipiner as *Todtenfeier*, has been explored by Hefling (“Mahler’s ‘Todtenfeier’ and the Problem of Program Music,” *19th Century Music* 12/1 [1988], pp. 27-53) and by Peter Franklin (“‘Funeral Rites’: Mahler and Mickiewicz,” *Music and Letters* 55/2 [1974], pp. 203-8).
- 10 An error has been corrected in the second measure of this example, where the original has a quarter rest instead of a half rest at the end.
- 11 The ellipses here indicate the omission of some of Mahler’s words regarding the relative speeds (with metronome markings) of the rests and the figures. They are placed after the sentence in the English translation, since it is impossible to replicate the placement before the main verb in the German.
- 12 This example has a minor error in the upper voice of its fourth measure (m. 46). The second note, A-flat, should be a dotted quarter note, followed by an eighth rest and an quarter note E-flat. The voice also lacks rests that are necessary in any case. These have been supplied, but the original erroneous rhythmic value of the two notes in question has been retained.
- 13 Cf. Bekker’s later description of E major as the key of “otherworldly rapture and transfiguration” in connection with the Fourth Symphony (pp. 344-45). See also Bekker’s comments on the use of that key in the Eighth Symphony (pp. 653-54). Bekker’s reference to the six-four chord as a harmonic depiction of the music’s “visionary impression” may have to do with the chord’s character of anticipation, with the heavily emphasized fifth as the bass.
- 14 The description of this return as “only apparent” is perhaps Bekker’s manner of explaining what is really a highly unusual event in what is still clearly the exposition of the movement: the return of the first theme before the presentation of a third, described by Constantin Floros as “completely against the rules” (*The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], p. 58).
- 15 As he does in connection with a prominent motive in the Finale of the First Symphony, Floros again points out Liszt’s so-called “Cross symbol” in the opening of this theme (See note 16 in the previous chapter, p. 158). See *The Symphonies*, pp. 58, 60. Reilly connects the similarity of these very passages to Mahler’s statement in the second program (the letter to Marschall) that the hero being borne to his grave is the one encountered in the First Symphony (“*Totenfeier* and the Second Symphony,” p. 101).
- 16 In the original, the fourth measure of this example lacks a quarter rest on the last beat of the top voice, which has been inserted here.

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- 17 This example and the sentence preceding it are very problematic. The example shows only two measures of descending quarter notes between the measures with triplets in the basses and those with fourths in the harps. There are actually six such measures in the score. The word “bässen” in the preceding sentence, which is not capitalized as it should be if an independent noun, could be attached to the preceding “Harfen.” “Harps and basses” is the most accurate rendering based on what is actually happening in the score at this point.
- 18 In sketches for the movement, this melody was labeled as “Meeresstille” (“Calm Sea”), an apparent reference to Goethe’s poem “Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt” (“Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage”). See Reilly, “Totenfeier and the Second Symphony,” pp. 94, 100, 102. See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 59.
- 19 This example has a significant error. The string notes placed under the second descending half-step (D–C-sharp) in m. 187 are actually those under the first one (m. 186). Bekker’s original has been retained here.
- 20 Bekker’s original version of this example mistakenly only has four sharps in the key signature. All A’s in the example are correctly sharp.
- 21 Bekker notes that the designation of the preceding section, which ends with the B-major march, as the first part of the development section is problematic. It is generally accepted, however, that the following section is developmental, and those who describe the preceding section as part of the development will typically describe the following one as the second part of the development section or even as a “second development.” Even then, however, there is disagreement. Floros, for example, begins the “second development” with the plodding basses in E-flat minor, beginning with m. 254. He places the brief flare-up and receding of the opening (also in E-flat minor) at the end of the “first development” (*The Symphonies*, p. 57). Reilly, however, begins the “second part” of the development with that passage, starting at m. 244. He also notes that this is the point where the final version of the movement differs most from the earlier *Totenfeier* version (“*Totenfeier*” and the Second Symphony,” pp. 103-4).
- 22 The entire passage from mm. 270-94 contains references to the Finale, including the “Dies irae” theme and three specific elements in this example, the opening “cross symbol” (see note 15 above), the “Resurrection motive” as noted by Bekker (mm. 283-85), and the following figure beginning with the downward leap of a fifth, termed the “Eternity motif” by Floros, who states that this passage is “of paramount importance to the interpretation of the movement,” and shows that the programmatic ideas of the Judgment Day and the Resurrection were already nascent when Mahler composed the *Totenfeier* version of the movement. (*The Symphonies*, p. 59).
- 23 The discussion here touches on the complicated history of the symphony’s genesis as already discussed, along with the placement of the Andante, a placement with which Mahler expressed some dissatisfaction, but which ultimately remained. The prescription for the five-minute pause has its roots here. See Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 278-80, n. 58. Mitchell quotes a 1903 letter from Mahler to Professor Julius Butts discussing the need for the lengthy pause. In this letter, Mahler also suggests a long pause before the Finale, which completely contradicts the prescribed *attacca* in the published score. Mitchell posits here that Mahler was never really at ease with the symphony’s final shape, a sentiment that is apparent from the letter to Butts. Floros also makes reference to this letter, as well as quoting a similar statement made to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, in *The Symphonies*, p. 62. In performances today, the pause is almost never as long as five minutes.
- 24 Bekker uses the term “Menuettpas” here, an apparent reference to the French dance term *pas*, as this is not a German word.

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- 25 Mitchell provides evidence that at one point, perhaps when constructing the manuscript full score, Mahler considered placing the Scherzo second, which speaks to his uneasiness about the strong contrast between the *Totenfeier* movement and the Andante. It is an indecision that reflects the later one about the order of the middle movements of the Sixth, but not as commonly discussed because the final order is not in dispute here. Apparently, Mahler was just as uncomfortable with placing two C-minor movements at the beginning of the symphony (again, there are echoes of this in the Sixth, where the abundance of A minor at the beginning is one problem with placing the Scherzo second). See *The Wunderhorn Years*, p. 278, m. 57, and pp. 285-86, n. 71. Thus, the continuous flow of the last three movements as discussed here by Bekker was not always part of the plan, and apparently something about which Mahler remained undecided, as the letter to Butts cited above shows.
- 26 Although Mitchell does state something similar, that the ultimate placement of “Urlicht” was meant to mediate between the Scherzo and the Finale, he demonstrates that the placement of the song is one of the most uncertain and complex aspects of the symphony’s genesis. Mahler at one point even considered placing the *Andante* in fourth position. See *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 184-87. See also pp. 273-74 in n. 50. It is clear the “Urlicht” was originally conceived and composed, at least in piano score, without thought of including it in the symphony. Whether the orchestration of the song was connected to its symphonic possibilities is a matter of some conjecture, as Mitchell discusses.
- 27 The Scherzo, as Mitchell notes, is the first “orchestral transcription” of a *Wunderhorn* song, and its composition followed closely upon that of the *Wunderhorn* songs themselves, in the time frame from 1891-93. See *The Wunderhorn Years*, p. 165.
- 28 This Goethe reference, like that describing the poem used for the Finale of the Fourth Symphony, comes from his 1806 review (“Rezension”) of the “Wunderhorn” collection: *Goethes Werke: Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand*, Band (Volume) 33 (Stuttgart & Tübingen: J. G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung, 1830), p. 192.
- 29 Bekker renders this as “Predig,” although most sources have “Predigt.”
- 30 The timpani introduction, which was not part of the initial manuscript draft, has its own complex history. See Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 271-72 in n. 50, and Appendix F, pp. 427-29.
- 31 The beater (or “switch”) made of a bundle of thin dowels or canes, typically used on the body of the bass drum. Mahler also used this beater/instrument in the Third, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies. It should not be confused with the English “whip” or “slapstick” (German “Peitsche” or “Holzklapper”), used by Mahler in the Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony. In this translation, the term “Rute” will be retained throughout without any attempt at translation. This usage is actually not uncommon in English. “Switch” or “broom-switch” (implied by Bekker’s term “Besenrute” in this first instance) is not typically seen.
- 32 The bottom note of the last chord in the penultimate measure of this example (m. 78) is an error, and should be D, not C. Bekker’s original is preserved here.
- 33 The German term “Nebenseptimenakkord” used here simply refers to any seventh chord that is not a dominant seventh. In this case, it is a minor seventh chord on the lowered seventh degree that, in the next measure, moves to an augmented sixth chord.
- 34 The text in the examples will only be translated if it does not appear elsewhere in the main body.

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- 35 This letter, of which Bekker's long quotation is the most familiar portion, is No. 155 in *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 135-37. As noted by Bekker in the "Anmerkungen," Mildenburg herself had published it in 1916.
- 36 Bekker's formal outline corresponds almost exactly to later formal analyses, such as Floros (*The Symphonies*, pp. 67-78) and Reilly ("Totenfeier and the Second Symphony," pp. 113-20). All speak of a three-part design that can (but need not) correspond to exposition, development, and recapitulation (or coda). Of almost greater interest is the reference to the "entourage of the dead," which is an idea in both the first (Bauer-Lechner) and the third (Dresden) programs. The following discussion of the "breakthrough of the programmatic," with its concessions, defenses, and ultimate justifications, is of great interest, and points strongly to Bekker's awareness of Mahler's own programmatic statements. See note 41 below.
- 37 Here Bekker returns again to the "finale problem" that had been a major subject of the opening "Symphonic Style" chapter.
- 38 As stated above in note 23, Mahler was ambivalent about this *attacca* as late as 1903.
- 39 The example omits a bar line between measures 12 and 13 (8 and 9 in the example). The instruments entering at that point are in $\frac{3}{8}$, not $\frac{2}{4}$. Bekker's original, without the bar line, is given here.
- 40 Bekker's "promise motive" is notably and memorably interpreted by Floros as the "eternity motive" (the first two measures of this example) and the "ascension motive" (the last two measures). Floros justifies this on the basis of the later text setting. See *The Symphonies*, p. 70 and p. 325, n. 40.
- 41 Bekker here refers to and quotes a portion of the first (Bauer-Lechner) program. Richard Specht quotes the last few sentences of it in his biography *Gustav Mahler* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1913), p. 240. At that point, and even at the time of Bekker's writing, Bauer-Lechner's statements were still anonymous. Specht himself qualifies his quotation by following it with "If Mahler really said these words, he said nothing but the truth." Bekker uses similar qualifying language. He then proceeds to downplay the significance of the programmatic interpretation of this section in particular. This is in keeping with his general attitude as was also seen in relation to the First Symphony.
- 42 "Die and Become" ("Stirb und Werde") is most likely a reference to Goethe's poem "Selige Sehnsucht" ("Blessed Longing") from 1815, where this same imperative is found in the last stanza.

[103]

THIRD SYMPHONY

[104 blank]

[105] **Among** Mahler's nine symphonies, there is but one that displays a program that is completely followed through and was also recognized by Mahler himself in later years: the Third. In the others there are individual movements with characteristic headings that are more or less programmatic. Thus, parts of the Finale of the Second Symphony are labeled "The Caller in the Desert" ("Der Rufer in der Wüste") and "The Great Roll Call" ("Der große Appell"). So also with the Scherzo of the Fourth Symphony, which was originally titled "Freund Hein [Death] Begins to Play" ("Freund Hein spielt auf"). Two middle movements of the Seventh Symphony carry the indication "Night Music" ("Nachtmusik"), and there are the various instrumental transcriptions of songs which are indirectly given programmatic meaning through their texts. But these are individual cases. Only one time, with the First Symphony, did Mahler decide, for the sake of clarification, to establish a program for the complete work after the fact, on the occasion of the premiere.¹ He heavily regretted this decision. The headings, which arose from the intent to give elucidation, proved not to be very vivid or memorable in invention. They only caused confusion and were later abolished by the composer.

This experience may have moved Mahler to also suppress the headings in later cases where they arose during the composition. At times, out of principle, he took care to avoid any kind of poetic indication. It thus came to pass that the study scores of his works do not display any of the above-mentioned authentic movement headings. He appears to have had subsequent misgivings about this far too ruthless eradication. Thus, he later restored the disavowed headings for individual performances, only there, however, where they had originally been available. Success had proved that this restoration was appropriate and a benefit to the hearers, the composer, and the work alike.

Such variations regarding the disclosure or the suppression of poetic headings do not justify any conclusion about Mahler's fundamental attitude toward program music. The question as to whether or not it is to be viewed as aesthetically satisfactory was not a problem for him. His artistry stood too high for him to either wish or be capable of ascribing to it any sort of party doctrine, no matter if for or against programs. He knew the stimulating value of the program as well as its restrictive effect, which would certainly come into play as soon as someone attempted to promote it to the basis for an artistic confession of faith. Thus, he did what all the great ones before him—Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven—had done. He availed himself of a program when it appeared useful to him, and he left it unused when it was superfluous. These cases were for him, as well as for all great musicians who had appeared in former times, the majority. The desire for a programmatic clarification made itself felt only in exceptional cases. This mostly occurred only in a single movement or even, as in the Finale of the Second Symphony, only in individual episodes within a movement. These, then, were moments in which the emotionally oriented creation suddenly turned into conceptual ideas—but only for a certain time—and then would be drawn back again into the emotional realm. On closer examination of such [106] movement headings, it is apparent that they are not programmatic in the customary sense of the word. They never contain a poetic idea of action, but only give a characteristic pictorial symbol of an internal process of feeling without an external action. They are therefore not conceptually devised, but are to be taken as emotional and beheld as visionary condensations of an internal experience that is represented in the allegory of the poetic picture. Where Mahler arrived at such pictorial visions, he there indicated them, and where this was not the case, the designation was omitted.

The Third Symphony offers the only example of a complete poetic description of all the movements and of the presence of a common basic idea that determines the construction and character of the complete work.² Here there can be no doubt as to whether Mahler already became aware of this idea during the composition or only later. Among the few surviving sketches are found two draft programs for the Third Symphony. Their deviation from the later version shows that they were drawn up before the performance of the score. The first draft, written on a page of music manuscript, reads:

Das glückliche Leben, ein Sommernachtstraum (nicht nach Shakespeare, Anmerkungen eines Kritikers [im Text durchgestrichen] Rezensenten):

- I. Was mir der Wald erzählt,
- II. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt,
- III. Was mir die Liebe erzählt,
- III. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt,
- IV. Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen,
- V. Was mir der Kuckuck erzählt,
- VI. Was mir das Kind erzählt.

The Happy Life, a Summer Night's Dream (not after Shakespeare, comments of a critic [struck through in the text] reviewer):

- I. What the Forest Tells Me,
- II. What the Twilight Tells Me,

- III. What Love Tells Me,
- III. What the Twilight Tells Me,³
- IV. What the Flowers on the Meadow Tell Me,
- V. What the Cuckoo Tells Me,
- VI. What the Child Tells Me.

Similarly, only with partially altered movement order, coming closer in the heading and the description of the introduction to the later execution, the second sketch reads:

- I. Der Sommer marschiert ein (Fanfare – lustiger Marsch, Einleitung nur Bläser und konzertierende Kontrabässe),
- II. Was mir der Wald erzählt (1. Satz),
- III. Was mir die Liebe erzählt (Adagio),
- IV. Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt (Scherzo, nur Steicher),
- V. Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen,
- VI. Was mir der Kuckuck erzählt,
- VII. Was mir das Kind erzählt.

- I. Summer Marches In (fanfare – comic march, introduction only winds and concertante contrabasses),
- II. What the Forest Tells Me (1st Movement),
- III. What Love Tells Me (Adagio),

IV. What the Twilight Tells Me (Scherzo, only strings),

V. What the Flowers on the Meadow Tell Me,

VI. What the Cuckoo Tells Me,

VII. What the Child Tells Me.

Besides these sketches, such as which are only similarly in existence for the Fourth Symphony in Mahler's complete oeuvre, there exist a number of detailed epistolary statements from the time of the Third's origin. Mahler also later appears to have spoken about no work with such ease and detail, either in writing or verbally, as he did about the Third. It could be a coincidence that an unusually rich selection of revealing utterances from Mahler about this particular work is on hand, while hardly a word is related about several others. The willingness with which Mahler granted information here remains striking, however. This willingness presupposes [107] that with the Third, he had arrived for himself at a particular conceptual clarity of view.

In view of the origin and basic poetic plan of the symphony, some letters to Anna Mildenburg from the summer months of 1896 are the most fertile. They originate from the time of the symphony's completion. Begun shortly after the conclusion of the Second and sketched in the fall of 1895, it was brought to completion in the following summer. The first of these letters, written on June 24 from Steinbach on the Attersee, immediately after the arrival of a fresh summer, leads directly into the (initially embarrassingly incapacitated) creative activity, or actually the creative intent: "Imagine this, that I have left the sketches to my work (the Third Symphony), which I now wished to work out during the summer, in Hamburg, and I am in complete despair over this. This is such an unlucky accident that it could cost me my vacation.

Can you understand what this entails? It is roughly so, as if you had left your voice lying around somewhere and now needed to wait for someone to send it to you again.”⁴

A few days pass before more communications follow. Evidently the sketches are first awaited. On July 1 there follows, referring to an earlier utterance that was wrongly understood, a note about the finale: “But in the symphony it is about a different love than you suppose. The motto to this movement (No. 7) reads:

Vater, sieh an die Wunden mein!
Kein Wesen laß verloren sein!

Father, look at my wounds!
Let no creature be lost!”⁵

Do you now understand what it is about? It should be indicated therewith as the summit and the highest level from which the world can be seen. I could also call the movement something like ‘What God Tells Me!’ precisely in that sense in which God can only be understood as ‘love.’ And thus my work forms a musical poem encompassing all levels of development in a gradual ascent. It begins with lifeless nature and climbs up to the love of God! People will have to spend some time cracking the nuts that I shake to them from the tree.”⁶

Here the finale is still described, as in the second of the above quoted sketches, as No. 7, while the symphony in its present form contains only six movements. The seventh movement was later omitted. It was not lost, however, as the Fourth Symphony grew out of it.

At the beginning of July, Mahler is now working out the first movement, full of freshness and devotion. As it says on July 6, “For this you shall receive something beautiful. The summer marches in, and it sounds and sings like you cannot imagine it! It bursts forth from all sides. And in between, it is once again as infinitely mysterious and painful as the lifeless nature that awaits coming life in dull motionlessness. It cannot be expressed in words.”⁷ As the work becomes ever more detached from him and comes more vividly before him, the desire for a

special designation is stirred. “Fate” gives a secretive hint through the mediation of an indistinct postmark: “As your letter came, I had some unusual fun. I looked at the postmark as usual [108] and noticed this time that where it otherwise would read Malborghetto, only P.A.N. stood (behind this a 30 was still there, but I did not see it). Now, for weeks I have been looking for an overall title for my work, and I have finally hit upon ‘Pan,’ which as you will surely know is an ancient Greek god that later came to be the embodiment of all things (Pan in Greek: everything). Now you may imagine what a surprise these three unintelligible letters caused me at first, which I afterward finally deciphered as Post Office (German: ‘Postamt’) No. 30. Is this not peculiar?”⁸

On July 10, a considerable portion of the score must have already been completed. Mahler believes that he can estimate a complete working time of only three more weeks. “I have also worked very diligently! Dear God, I will take a deep breath when I have brought this work to a happy conclusion. It will be like the farmer who has brought his grain into the barn. I probably need about three more weeks! But then there will be hurrahs! And rest! If only the dear sunshine would also give its blessing—for now it behaves dreadfully! Not one half hour goes by here without a sound rain shower! It is so frustrating that one is really justified in talking on and on about the weather.”⁹

The creative surge is now in its strongest drive. Because of this, the letter exchange may have suffered. The deeply serious tone in the conclusion of the next letter shows that Mahler is now moved to his core by the mysterious creative urge to which he feels subjugated. “Now I have written to you that I am working on a large work. You cannot comprehend how this demands the whole person and how one can plunge into it so deeply that to the outside world, it is as if one has died. But now imagine such a large work in which the whole world is actually

reflected—one is himself, so to say, only an instrument upon which the universe plays. I have already explained it to you often—and you must accept it if you really have understanding for me. You see, all those who are going to live with me must learn this. In such moments I no longer belong to myself. The creator of such a work suffers terrible labor pains, and before everything becomes ordered, constructed, and fired up in his mind, there must be much vagueness, one must become much lost in thought, and one must often become dead to the outside world . . . My symphony will be something that the world has never yet heard! All nature receives a voice in it and tells of such secrets that one would perhaps imagine in a dream! I tell you, I am myself sometimes uneasy about many passages, and it seems to me as if I had not done this at all. If only I can complete everything as I intend.”¹⁰

On July 21, the conclusion is finally in view. The inner excitement has let up somewhat, and the joy of completion, yet at the same time a wistfulness in taking leave of a part of his life, presses into his consciousness: “My work still drags on! I will take such a deep breath when I can write to you: I am finished! And yet it is strange to say goodbye to the work that was the embodiment of one’s life throughout all of two years! Can you understand that?”¹¹

There are not many letters of this kind by Mahler, or at least they have not become known at this point. The essentials of Mahlerian creation [109], however, are expressed so clearly and spontaneously in these and the few other available statements that this one group of letters is enough to understand the artist and the man as much as he can be understood at all from this perspective. One sees that he feels—and his statements up until the Eighth confirm this—that he is being driven, or that he is a tool. He stands under the force of a mission, of a higher creative power that causes him happiness, yet which he also dreads at times. One sees that

programmatic ideas in the sense of predetermined literary plans are distant from him. During the creation, however, the musical and pictorial vision is developed, and in certain moments impels him to the sung word and in others to words of poetic elucidation. The comments in the letters confirm the inner context and the organic growth of the parts, and they give detailed and valuable explanations and supplements.¹²

The basic plan of the Third Symphony presupposes the experience of the Second, namely the inner experience of the miracle of creation, and a faith in the continued life of the force. This creative miracle, which blossoms there out of doubts and struggles, now represents to the artist the details of his Becoming. The tragic color of the Second is not heard again for the time being. The question of whereto and wherein has been answered. Now it is the germination and flowering of the eternally reigning force itself, its awakening and growth throughout all stages of a cosmic existence that fulfills the artist and gives him the creative impulse. He feels himself at one with this elemental power. For him, who only recognizes himself as the vessel of a higher will, the music that floods through him is a symbol and a reflection of life. As it had passed the way from death to life, as it had itself both died and resurrected, as it were, it necessarily experienced the great external and internal change that was promised in the closing message of the Second Symphony.

Thus is formed in him the image of a newly emerging world, a creative act that is not called forth by a god who pushes from the outside, rather through the instinct that presses toward fulfillment, through the restless longing of the inner creative will. This world emerges out of the chaos, out of inanimate, inflexible matter. Into this sounds the awakening call of Pan, of the god of the earth, or of summer, or—if the symbol is to be grasped in a further sense—of the artist.

He animates the unfeeling matter, wakes it into consciousness, and makes it fertile. This creative act provides the content of the first section (“Abteilung”) of the work, the first movement. The heading in Mahler’s last version reads: “Pan erwacht.—Bacchuszug. (Der Sommer marschiert ein.) [“Pan Awakes.—Procession of Bacchus. (Summer marches in.)”]

The awakening and fertilization of matter through the creative spirit, here understood as the spirit of natural life, makes up the content of the symphony’s first part. The second reflects the development through all stages up to the realization of the miracle of love as the actual creative force. The life circles of all beings created on earth are passed through. Flowers, animals, and humanity tell, not in vivid illustrations of conceptual things, but in musical designs upon which are reflected the inwardly essential spiritual and organic forces. The music itself appears to become flower, animal, and human, [110] and to take on the traits of that which the musician allows to speak. It is as if the music is creating this expressive ladder in order to be able to speak ever more intensively, more deeply reaching, more inwardly moving, in fact ever more musically. From the language of humanity, which carries “pleasure and sorrow” (“Lust und Herzeleid”), according to the words of Nietzsche’s “drunken song,”¹³ it rises further to the language of the angels. Here, pain and joy fade away, and pure, crystallized serenity spreads itself out. Only the mystical fundamental colors hint that this liberated clarity has not been acquired without effort and that it rests upon the bedrock of veiled pain. The choir of angels is followed by the ascent to the last height: to the revelation of love, the godly power of creation. It is a musical path of development in the truest sense. The striving to express the deepest and most intimate of which sound is capable of expressing makes the passage through all other circles of expression and feeling necessary to both the creator and to the listeners. Only out of

the preceding five-step ascent could this last become visible and sensually tangible. This final movement is the first Adagio among Mahler's fifteen symphonic movements to this point. Such a development and such a collection were necessary for him to obtain the strength for the intensity of a large Adagio. The Adagio is not only the Finale of the Third Symphony. It is the overall Finale of the three symphonies to this point, the first movement of Mahler carried by a pure, present feeling of happiness. It is the first that comes to an internal stop and finds a point of rest. Not only to catch breath and then to storm along further. It brings together and releases all dissonances into a pure major-key fulfillment, lifting the feeling of Being up to a summit. That is love as Mahler understands it, love as the universally animating power of nature, as the fundamental ethical fact of life as such.

A poetic, a philosophical, and a musical course of ideas come together. One cannot say that one is their leader and the others are only an entourage. All three are covered in the course of the development and in its goal. The substance radiated out in three directions. It summarized the previous battles of the man and the artist, and it carried in itself a closed confession. Beyond the past and the present, Mahler threw the anchor here far into the future. The ideal direction of his creation and belief was now settled. The coming works could perhaps bring up new individual problems and could also bring summaries of new viewpoints. Mahler, however, could not again deviate from the fundamental attitude that is here won, from the confession of the great power of love, from the longing for it as the goal of life's dreams. Each of his future works is the attempt to discover a new path to this goal, until the dream becomes truth in the Eighth Symphony. The difference in the works from the Third to the Eighth is not a difference in the goal, but in the path. This path, mapped by the special relationship to the goal, determines the

style.

Fundamental to the style of the Third Symphony was the idea of immediately experiencing organic natural events. The common experience proved to be internally founded in the philosophical, in the poetic, and above all in the musical sense. It effected the gradual purification and strengthening of the [111] expression in sound, and it determined the details of the musical and formal design. Such an encompassing plan as the representation of natural life, from its most primitive stirrings throughout all developmental circles up to the inclusion of the innermost emanations of feeling, required an expressive apparatus of unusually rich construction and capability of motion. Mahler takes all the instrumental means of representation that are accessible to him. The woodwinds are quadrupled throughout, two flutes exchange with two piccolos, fourth oboe with English horn, third clarinet with bass clarinet, and two E-flat clarinets appear separately. Of the brass are required eight horns, four trumpets, four trombones and tuba. The percussion instruments again appear as a group in themselves: six timpani, served by two players, glockenspiel, tambourine, tam-tam, triangle, suspended cymbal, snare drum, bass drum with attached cymbal, and the rute,¹⁴ which is struck on the wood of the bass drum. To these columns of wind and percussion comes the highest possible number of string instruments: a string orchestra with two harps. Besides the instrumental forces, vocal ones are also required in the course of the work: alto solo, women's choir, and boys' choir. Furthermore, in the distance are set a post horn, several snare drums, and four tuned bells.

Mahler musters this host for the Third Symphony. With the accurate fulfillment of all his wishes, the head count amounts to about 120 without factoring in the singers. In order to avoid deriving false external motives about such a contingent of resources, one must take into account

here, as in the Second Symphony, the character of the material. It does not only make necessary the use of all attainable sonic resources, its power of expansion also affects the formal design and drives it to similarly large dimensions and similarly lavish structural divisions as are demonstrated in the sound apparatus. The First and Second Symphonies had evolved to the final buildup through the Finale. Only with the final movements had the symphonic action directly commenced, and the focus of the inner and outer development was therewith shifted through the structural plan to the last movement. With the Third Symphony, the material necessitated another layout. The narrative of “love” was the ideal core of the work, the tip of the pyramid. The external mass of material, however, naturally needed to lie more toward the bottom, and most strongly there, where the lowest organic life arrives at its representation, where the lifeless matter was to be first awakened to the unfolding of harmonically induced forms of existence. Here the outer quantity and also its musical representation accumulated, here the musician was presented with the most difficult assignment: to make the stimulation of dead matter into organic existence comprehensible—not in the programmatic or intellectual, but rather in the musical sense. It was, as it were, from nothing, from a dead calm, to allow a musical structure to grow melodically, rhythmically, harmonically, and sonically, to make the miracle of Emerging and Becoming musically tangible, to experience it and to allow the listener to experience it as well.

This is the assignment of the first movement of the Third Symphony. The poetic allegory in which the mystery of Becoming was illustrated was only [112] a mediating symbol. For the musician, it was necessary to artistically grasp the primeval phenomenon as such and to represent it, to awake the music itself, as it were, out of a dead slumber to spring up to life.

The design of the first movement was created out of such an attitude. Should one again

question whether, or even demonstrate that the sonata scheme can also here, with certain liberties, be constructed out of it? It depends on only one thing: to recognize how Mahler has formed “Becoming” into a formal musical and sonic experience. One can at the same time throw occasional comparative looks back at the structural and thematic technique of the old style. Not to find it again with Mahler, but only to see how Mahler was able to manage without it or, when he appears to come close to it, to press it down to practical meaninglessness.

Thus one finds in this larger than life symphonic movement—the measure count approaches 900 and it lasts almost three quarters of an hour—really no thematic or motivic work. In the opening movements of the two preceding symphonies, Mahler had still brought a detailed and conscious value to this work. Particularly the main theme of the C-minor symphony is thoroughly developed and motivically spun out. With the Third, the impulsive motion of the theme no longer lies in this or that motivic link. It lies in the expansive melodic force of the idea. The theme is not changed in psychology or in physiognomy. It is extended and placed in ever new and changing categories. It is no longer the seed of the symphonic event and no longer its shortest formulation. It is only an external means of movement. The symphonic process runs below the thematic events and is not represented through them, but only commented upon. Thereby the theme loses essential aspects of its previous character: the plastic brevity and sharply drawn physiognomy, the motto-like aura, the concise periodic closure. It obtains from the outset a more songlike melodic reach and rounding. It does not press to a specific conclusion, but seeks much more to acquire alternating extensions. The theme is also no longer the focus of the development and the goal of the coda. These musical and formal thoughts and concepts of organization dissolve almost without notice. In the place of the formal organism

with ground plans that are intellectually and constructively conceived steps a free-flowing force of design, creating and compelling through a sudden impulse of the will. The collective inner experience of this creative will that is formed out of an instinctive drive to more and more strength and clarity constitutes the deepest appeal of the Mahlerian symphonic art. If the formation of “Becoming” was to be a particular basic idea of the Third Symphony and described in the details of its gigantic first movement, then this is also true of Mahler’s subsequent output in general. If this comes into play especially urgently in the Third, it can be explained from this that Mahler had here penetrated for the first time to the primeval essence of his own nature and now gave himself to it with the ardent fervor of a consciousness of personality that had been won.

If one recognizes that from now on the theme and its development can no longer be spoken of in the usual sense, one comprehends the [113] contradictions in most analytical explanations, particularly of the Third Symphony, in relation to the thematic characters. The differences of opinion already begin with the identification of the main theme. Mahler described the whole as “introduction and first movement.” He does not, however, draw a sharp borderline between the two parts, and he also makes further use of the very opening—similarly as in the First Symphony—within the movement that follows later on. A distinctly recognizable transitional point and therewith the actual beginning of the first exposition is no longer apparent, nor is the main theme, which according to the rule must open the exposition. Instead of this, an entire row of thematic structures are presented, whose free sequence Mahler perhaps perceived as an “introduction,” and whose gradual expansion then may have appeared to him as the main movement.¹⁵

In order to view the development of the whole, it is best to hold back the questions of themes and groupings within the movement and to look it over merely from those viewpoints which were authoritative for Mahler himself. What Mahler envisioned was expressed in the letter of July 6, 1896: “The summer marches in, and it sounds and sings . . . it bursts forth from all sides. And in between, it is once again as infinitely mysterious and painful as the lifeless nature that awaits coming life in dull motionlessness . . . It cannot be expressed in words.” To the extent that it can be expressed in words, he has said it here. One only needs to take up these sentences in oneself in order to arrive at a formal understanding of the movement.

Mahler identifies at first the two contrasts out of whose intertwining the inner life of the movement grows: the “lifeless nature that awaits coming life in dull motionlessness” and the fertile force of the one who is marching in. No matter whether it is Summer, Pan, Bacchus, or some other fruitful god or man—he is the awakener. The awakener and the one to be awakened, the one who procreates and the one who painfully and joyfully gives birth, these are the forces in the action. An older or a programmatic symphonic aesthetic would have represented them in two opposing themes. For Mahler, such a musical arrangement would have meant a simplistic reduction of his ideas. Only the awakening call was musically describable. It sounds out without preparation, without accompaniment, intoned in unison by eight horns as the first message resounding out into the lifeless world:



[Example 3-1: horns, upbeat to m. 1-m. 11 (note variance from revised score on last beat of m. 10, lacks eighth-note division in horns 4, 6, 7, 8), unison strings with bassoons and timpani, mm. 6-8]

In a carefree mixture of folk style and grandly striding march, beginning “strongly and decisively” (“kräftig, entschieden”), the theme remains harmonically unburdened until the fifth measure, a purely melodic, sweeping force. From the sixth measure on a light obstruction enters: the upward directed eighth-note motion in the last beat of the measure does not freely thrust above. It must start again several times. Burdensome bass weights hang themselves upon the striving force, returning from measure to measure, pulling down with tenacious energy until this succeeds in the ninth [114] measure. The onward pressing drive is powerfully pulled down below in two measures and it ends on a long held A. The shape and character of this idea are indicative of Mahler’s kind of symbolic sound design: a force that is free of all bonds begins with a strong sweep, lifts itself upward, and is then seized and pulled downward by another force that reaches up out of the depths. It sinks down into mystical bass harmonies:



[Example 3-2: bassoons, contrabassoon, horns, trombones, tuba, mm. 11-22]

What is this second, downward compelling force? Mahler not only gave the answer in that letter to Anna Mildenburg. It can also be found in the symphony itself, in the fourth movement, where to the same music mankind tells us: “O Mensch, gib acht, was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht? Ich schlief.” (“O man, give heed, what does the deep midnight speak? I slept.”) It is, as Mahler writes with other words in the letter, the “lifeless nature that awaits coming life in dull motionlessness,” but which at first resists it, prevents it, from the instinct of the unmoved will against the life that will make it fruitful.

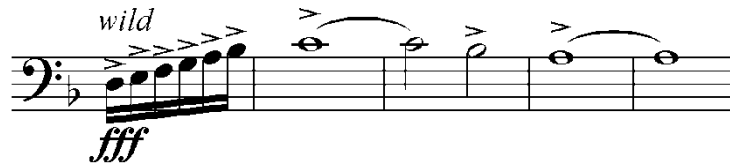
The first forceful motion is again paralyzed, but the seed has been sown and has penetrated to the depths. It works there, slowly creating motion, rousing the “heavy and hollow” (“schwer und dumpf”) elements, thrusting upward in funeral march-like rhythms and violently trenchant fanfare dissonances:

Schwer und dumpf

The musical score is for a section titled "Schwer und dumpf". It features four staves: Tromb. (Trombones), Bsn. (Bassoons), Ob. Cl. (Oboes and Clarinets), and Timp. (Timpani). The Trombone staff has a triplet of chords marked *pp*. The Bassoon staff has a trill marked *pp*. The Oboe/Clarinet staff has a triplet of chords marked *pp*. The Timpani staff has a triplet of chords marked *pp*. The Muted Trumpet staff has a triplet of chords marked *pp*, followed by a fanfare marked *ff*, and then a triplet of chords marked *p*. The score includes dynamic markings like *pp*, *ff*, and *p*, and articulation like *tr* (trill).

[Example 3-3: trombones, mm. 27 and 29; bassoons and contrabassoon, mm. 28-30, beat 2; oboes and clarinets, mm. 30-33; muted trumpet, mm. 31-33; bass drum, mm. 28, beat 1 and 30, beat 1]

The motion in the depths continues to grow, and obtains strength of refusal against the waking motive. It strengthens into a “wildly” (“wild”) ascending bass run, powerfully shoving aside the influence from above:



[Example 3-4: cellos and basses, mm. 38-42]

It is reiterated in a dramatic buildup, storming up to the octave D in triple *forte* on the third statement. It then continues to return in measured passages, remaining a symbol of repelling defiance against the developments that threaten from above: a motive of opposition. From here as well, intellectual threads are drawn far into the later movements. This motive of opposition—if the designation may be retained for the sake of understanding—does not only return in the course of the first movement as a sign of the inner crisis, the relapse back into the paralysis of the beginning. Its repelling force, claiming rights to the lower regions, even works itself into the final Adagio, and only there is it brought to a resolution.

Brought to a pulse by the movements in the depths, the upward-pressing awakening call stirs anew. It is not the confident beginning, but the continuation, against which the resistance was first deployed. In a “moving” (“bewegt”) melodic line that penetrates further, undermined by the opposition motive, it seeks a liberated conclusion: [115]



[Example 3-5: horns, mm. 57-68]

The mood, originally presented as powerful and decisive, has turned more and more into an intense excitement. The upper voice has achieved melodic freedom of movement against the resistance of the depths. Its melodic line, however, is filled with almost painfully accentuated passion. It releases itself into a new thematic song full of dramatic triplet patterns:



[Example 3-6: trumpet, mm. 83-90]

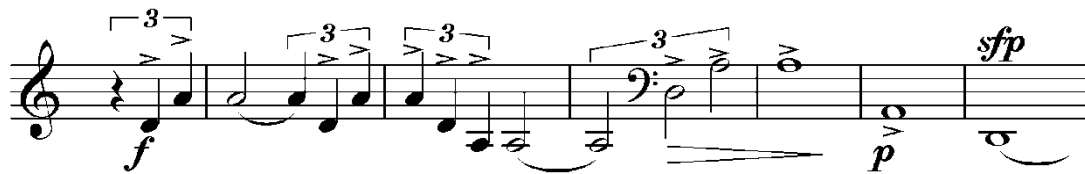
This theme as well is no fleetingly appearing improvisation. The fourth movement brings it again to the fore with the words of mankind, “Tief ist ihr Weh” (“Deep is its sorrow”). There, this melody finds fulfillment at the same time in the transfigured major-key conclusion: “Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit, will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit” (“But all desire wants eternity, wants deep, deep eternity”).

For the introduction to the first movement, the triplet theme initially signifies only an episode that increases the lyrical pathos of the basic mood. A renewed powerful outbreak of the awakening call follows:



[Example 3-7: five horns, mm. 99-109]¹⁶

With a broad closing fanfare, it self-assuredly finishes with a long-resounding echo:



[Example 3-8: horns 4 and 7, mm. 118-124]

If one observes the course of the introduction to this point, which does not yet signify its conclusion, the outlines of symphonic “Becoming” are already clearly differentiated and are also recognizable in their ways of acting together. They are two opposing forces: that which actively pushes forward and that which passively resists. The two are characterized in different ways. The awakening call only obtains a malleable form with a completely closed, songlike, linear melody. The opposing idea does not arrive at a similarly defined shape, and also cannot arrive there, for it lacks the inwardly driving activity. Perhaps that isolated stirring of “opposition” shapes itself into a character motive that arises episodically. The essence of the contrast between the two basic principles, however, lies in the desire to avoid activity, in the preservation of the lifelessness in the second complex of ideas. It therefore does not represent a thematic appearance in the earlier sense of a secondary theme. It is negatively composed as the force of gravity, of perseverance, and of invariability. The shapes that occur here and which belong to this complex are thus not characterized melodically, but primarily rhythmically and harmonically. One can describe the development which has been initiated as striving to strike up melodic sparks out of the harmonic and rhythmic sound complex of this contrasting impression through the impulsiveness of the awakening call. The awakening call pushes melodically, as it were, into the primal harmonic mass, and it forces [116] the reluctant and the defensive forces to

thematically shape themselves and to become melodic manifestations. This is the internal organic process of the first movement, and so it fulfills its musical as well as its poetic program.

Because of the peculiarity of the formal design, determined by the material, the usual thematic dualism of the symphonic movement could not be applied. In this case, the essence of the second theme consisted therein, that it—paradoxically speaking—was not present, at least not as a concrete appearance, and that, restricted to elemental utterances, it only worked as an unformed contradiction, upon which the first and only theme of the movement could unfold itself to an ever more richly blossoming life. Thus, one can neither call Schiedermair wrong when he specifies that the first theme is three measures, nor Nodnagel, who assigns no less than 101 measures for the theme. Both are right, both are wrong. The concept of a periodically closed theme is invalid here, for the whole movement is a continual thematic birth.¹⁷

Thus in the introduction, a new sonic picture immediately follows the D-minor close of the awakening call. Again, it is no contrast, only an addition, this time turning toward the brighter side. Surrounded by muted violin *tremolos*, light flute harmonies ring out in delicate chromatic shifts, heralding a distant march. Clarinets answer in echo tone, and a pastoral melody in the oboe sways in gentle curves:¹⁸



[Example 3-9: flutes and piccolos, mm. 132-135; oboe, mm. 136-139]

The awakening call of the horns has set things in motion, and from distant heights, an answer sounds like a signal:¹⁹



[Example 3-10: clarinets, including E-flat clarinets, mm. 148-150]

Nebulous rolling sequences of bass runs, as if released by a sudden jolt, seek to bring the rhythmic motion that has been initiated by the awakening call into a flow, so to speak:



[Example 3-11: cellos, mm. 151-153]

Timpani rolls, triangle, cymbal and bass drum beats all ring out in quiet but clear rhythms. The impetus appears to work further, circling around—then the motion runs once again to a halt. “Slowly, heavily” (“Langsam, schwer”) appear once again the oppressive harmonies and the rumbling bass trills of the low instruments, this time dramatically broadened by the $\frac{3}{2}$ meter, burdening the lightly striding motion that has just been initiated with heavy weights. But now the force that awakened the melody climbs deeper down into dark sound regions than before. The awakening call, along with its continuation, now sounds melancholy, expanded by the trombones into a recitative. A battle, rising to a passionate *accelerando* and a “wild” pathos, arises between the downward-pulling powers of lifeless gravity and the upward-pressing ones of the melodic life. It ends with the disappearance of the latter. They dissolve into a shadowy fog.

Coming out of it, the melodic motive enters anew that had previously indicated the answer [117] from the heights to the awakening call. Now in the bass register, sounding from the region of the previous resistance, it appears to proclaim the awakening of the drive to life and to creation, even at the lowest level:



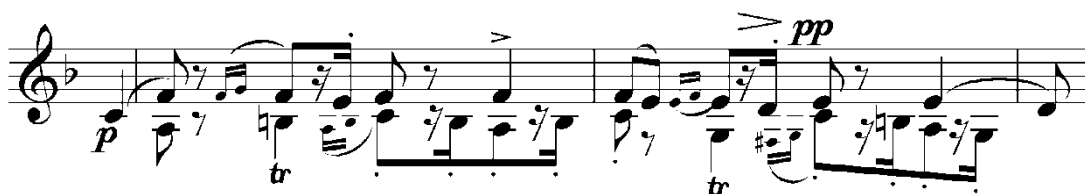
[Example 3-12: cellos and basses, mm. 228-232]

The harmony is pushed out of D-flat major down to a fresh C major. The syrinx calls resound *fortissimo* while the sixteenth-note runs of the string basses roll in anew. “As from a great distance” (“Wie aus weiter Ferne”), light march rhythms are heard in the string section:



[Example 3-13: first violins, mm. 246-248]

Over leaping accompanying motions in the basses, folk-like, cheerful melodic arches are spread:



[Example 3-14: 1st clarinet, cellos, basses, mm. 254-255 (clarinet last beat of m. 253); first violins, last beat of m. 255 and first beat of m. 256]

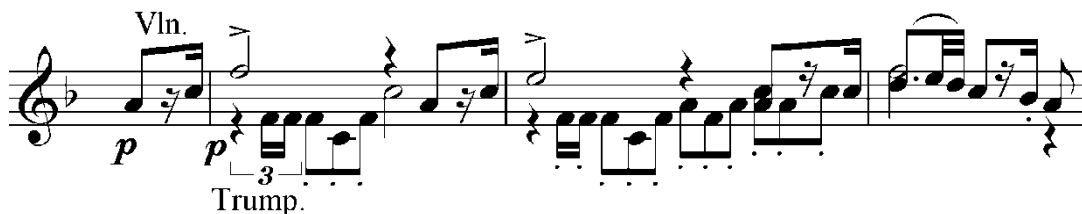
Always firmer and clearer, the picture brightens and the dark elements are blown away. The

awakening call sings out into the world as a march melody, “with the most gentle tone production” (“mit zartester Tongebung”), expanded by the answering theme in the woodwinds:



[Example 3-15: 1st horn, mm. 272-276; first violins, mm. 276-278; 1st flute, 1st oboe, and 1st clarinet, mm. 278-282; 3rd and 4th flutes, 4th oboe, m. 282]

The first movement proper begins here²⁰—and so Mahler has now shaped his symphonic introduction. Even with the expectations raised by his own First Symphony, this was an extraordinary step. In the uninterrupted continuity and progressive strength of the organization, independent of every constructive scheme, this introduction signifies a height of formative ability that hardly allowed any further buildup. The basic idea of “Becoming” has demonstrated its creative power and retains it in the further extension of the movement. “The summer marches in, and it sounds and sings like you cannot imagine it! It bursts forth from all sides.” Violins, at the beginning reduced to half of the players, stride forward. Bold trumpet fanfares and timpani rolls accompany, supported by basses marching out like an infantry and viola trills:



[Example 3-16: first violins, trumpet, mm. 288-291]

The fanfares sound out more strongly from the horns:



[Example 3-17: horns 1 and 3, mm. 294-297]

The syrinx sounds now appear again as well:



[Example 3-18: flutes, oboes, clarinets, cellos, basses, mm. 302-303]

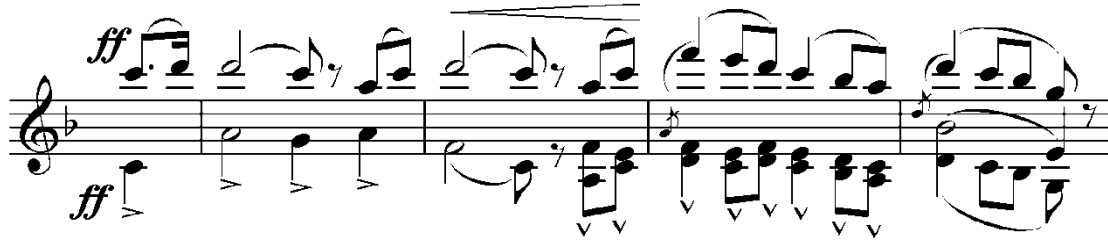
A new high-spirited march group enters in the woodwind choir:



[Example 3-19: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 306-308]

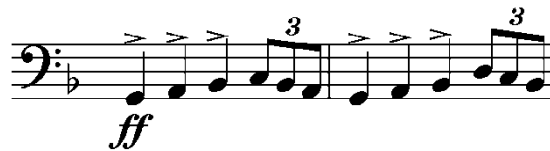
And now, “sweeping, consistently in the same fiery march tempo, but without hurrying”

(“Schwungvoll, immer dasselbe feurige Marschtempo, ohne zu eilen”), is the awakening song in powerful *forte* of the horns, striding triumphantly under grandly sweeping melodic strands in the violins:



[Example 3-20: violins, four horns, 1st trumpet, mm. 314-318]

[118] To this, a greeting from the First and Second Symphonies comes in the basses, one of Mahler's typical fundamental formulas:



[Example 3-21: cellos and basses, mm. 327-328]

It continues to grow in grandeur and color of sound, swinging from F major into the warm D major. Dominant and tonic chords crudely bump against each other in horns and trumpets, and with a footnote in the score, Mahler guards himself against the assumption of a printing error on the third beat:



[Example 3-22: flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns, trumpets (second violins, violas), mm. 330-332 (clashing horn notes not shown in m. 332)]

The melody of the awakening call strengthens itself into a three-voice harmonized song:



[Example 3-23: horns and trumpets, mm. 346-350]

Finally, everything is unified: the full string orchestra, bassoons, horns, and tuba come to a broadly-stroked unison that victoriously marches out:



[Example 3-24: all strings, bassoons, horns, tuba, mm. 351-359 (only violins in m. 359)]

The woodwinds rejoice in a long-held trill on A. In the trumpets, a proud countermelody directs itself upward:



[Example 3-25: trumpets, mm. 351-359 (3rd and 4th in m. 351, all four in mm. 352-354, 1st and 2nd in mm. 355-358, 1st only in m. 359)]

Under this, the unison melody succinctly stamps, an archetype of bucolic, carefree strength. Suddenly, at the high and apparent endpoint in D major, there is an abrupt change to B-flat major: the motive of “opposition,” known from the introduction in the basses, flares up in a force that breaks out with no transition. Allotted to the middle voices and given more penetrative

urgency through doubled thirds, it breaks through the upward striving line and forces it to collapse:



[Example 3-26: oboes, clarinets, 3rd and 4th trumpets, second violins, violas, mm. 363-366; flutes and piccolo, E-flat clarinet, 1st and 2nd trumpets, first violins, violas, m. 367; oboes, clarinets, 3rd and 4th trumpets, second violins, m. 368]

“With greatest strength” (“Mit höchster Kraft”), the 8 horns, with violin *tremolos* quivering around them and with the particularly accented measures emphasized through woodwind doubling, intone the passionate closing call of the awakening melody:



[Example 3-27: horns, mm. 368-377, doubled by oboes and clarinets in mm. 371, 374-377]

“Tief ist ihr Weh” (“Deep is its sorrow”) sounds the answer from the trumpets. The light and cheerful colors have vanished. In their place come violently thrusting wind chords, agitated and buzzing *tremolos* of woodwinds and strings, and commanding beats from timpani and drums.²¹ Out of this fall back into the previous sound world of the introduction, an instrumental voice, speaking like a recitative, arises: the trombone sings out, “sentimentally” (“sentimental”), according to Mahler’s indication, the “lament of fettered life from the abyss of still and lifeless nature”:



[Example 3-28: trombone, mm. 423-432]

With this outbreak of pain from silent nature, the pressure appears to be released again which had [119] abruptly interrupted the Becoming, the Sprouting. The awakening call quietly loses itself in the elegiac English horn. “As from the greatest distance” (“Wie aus weitester Ferne”), the germinating motives of life arise again. The joyful song, which had closed the D-major expansion in unison strings and winds as a sort of hymn in praise of blooming, now sings out “softly and expressively” (“weich und ausdrucksvoll”) in G-flat major from the horn, and it is dreamily brought to closure by a solo cello and a clarinet.



[Example 3-29: solo horn, mm. 492-495]²²

A new procession comes to order. If the lyrical forces, urgently and joyfully singing out, stood out in the first march, more robust elements now take over the leadership. “It is not a Dionysian mood, but rather one of satyrs and those sorts of rough natural fellows playing around.” From the depths, the march motive quietly rises up:²³



[Example 3-30: cellos and basses, mm. 530-532]

Shrill upper voices are heard in the midst of it, the awakening call of the horns is grotesquely distorted, while discordant fanfares and “rough” (“roh”), crude accompanying offbeat rhythms in horns and trombones give the picture an intentionally vulgar color. It is like a procession of poltergeists, like a Walpurgis Night, turned to nature myths, full of joy in the earthy noise, full of a malevolent unfolding of the meaner aspects in the urge to fertility. Into this confused driving and stamping of the elements sounds anew the ordering awakening call, at first interrupted by the natural forces that are captivated by the sensual urges of life.²⁴ With increasing power, however, the call penetrates through to its higher being. As at the beginning of the symphony, it resounds widely into the newly emerging creation, which is now ready to burst out of the bud.²⁵

One more time, as at the beginning, the call sinks into the depths, and once more it appears to be swallowed therein, willfully held in the darkness of “heavy” (“schwer”) harmonies. Now it presses immediately upward again. The recitative of the trombones serves this time as a direct response from the depths and fades away in a sustained D-major sound.²⁶ Again, the march motives of the first part draw near, singing, wantonly teasing, and thereby urging to an ever freer unfolding. “With great expression” (“Mit großem Ausdruck”), now coming forward *portamento*, now striding steadily as a march, is the leading idea, around which everything is united and to which everything strives: the awakening call. In unshakeable certainty it continues to pull new forces unto itself, easily and calmly governing all fanfares and ranting motives, swelling like a stream which, fed by countless tributaries, desires to flow into the sea. One more

time, in the moment of the freest jubilation, that rebellious motive of opposition roars up, as it had similarly torn apart the first march before. But this time it is to no avail. Only the moment of its sounding out and its sudden arising is left to it. Already in the next moment, march fanfares smash it down. G-flat major changes with a sharp lurch over G back to F major. Brass with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter in die Höhe”), strings beating with the wood of the bow, everything charges “with greatest strength” (“mit höchster Kraft”) in a reeling upward sweep to the “sharply cut off” (“scharf abreissend”) conclusion.

[120] **Mahler** not only strictly observed the large pause prescribed after the first section in performances of this symphony. He even inserted here the usual concert intermission and indicated through this that he allowed the listener, beyond a brief rest, an external diversion. Such intellectual relaxation is justified by the immense scale of the movement. Furthermore, it does not in the least hinder the effective capability of the second part. This represents a world that is independent of the first movement. In the first movement, “Becoming” is carried out: the change from lifelessness to liveliness. In the second part there reigns the imagination of that which has become.²⁷ The manifestations in this part do not arise, they exist. Flowers, animals, mankind, angels, and divine love tell the story, representing themselves in the nature of their existence. The sensing of a commonality and liveliness in everything that offers itself to reflection, the comprehension of the diverse colors in these manifestations as a profound unity stemming from a single root, this was perhaps that which enticed the musician and drove him to allow all of this to become alive in sound. In music also lives this primeval force, whose origin and kind nobody knew and which even of itself very well could “tell,” but could “explain”

nothing.

The musical element in the poetic sketch of this symphony, particularly of the second part, is quite high; the purely philosophical and abstract, however, cannot be judged as decisive. Mahler consistently arrived at creation from music, not out of philosophy. One could disregard every intellectual explanation regarding this second part, and simply interpret it musically and formally. What Mahler represents in the five movements of this part of the symphony is—taken empirically—a heightening of musical form and genre from a primitive dance type across the more richly structured, poetically decorated Scherzo and internalized song to the emotionally mature expression of the final Adagio. The order of movements in the second part thus musically represents a stepwise ascent within the formal organism from the simple idyll that is also narrowly defined in mood up toward the mystically moving Adagio that exhausts, intellectually and structurally, the utmost possibilities of a pure emotional language. There is also no preconceived intention that underlies this ascent. The musician required such a gradual intensification of linguistic and representational abilities in order to be able to say that which he had in mind as the concluding word of the symphony.

The first link in the chain, the “Tempo di Menuetto, sehr mäßig, ja nicht eilen” (“Tempo di Menuetto, very measured, so do not rush”), belongs to the group of purely idyllic tone poems or fantasies of Mahler which are opened by the Andante of the Second Symphony and closed by the second “Nachtmusik” of the Seventh. Since its premiere—the two middle movements of the Third were initially known without the first movement and the later song movements—it has been one of the “best loved” pieces by Mahler.²⁸ He himself wrote ironically in 1896 to Richard Batka of the “flower piece that has gained momentum”: “This is now desired by the conductors

of most concert institutions, for which I may thank the good ‘critics’ who had previously not spoiled me so very much. That this small piece (more an intermezzo in the whole), torn out of the context of the larger work, which is my most meaningful and extensive, will necessarily cause misunderstanding, [121] cannot hinder me from releasing it by itself. There simply remains no choice for me, for if I wish to finally be heard, I must not be squeamish, and so perhaps in this season, this modest little piece will often ‘bleed at the pedestal of Pompey’ and introduce me to the public as a ‘meditative, fine-spun’ singer of nature. Anything about how this nature conceals within itself everything that is gruesome, grand, and also lovely (and that is exactly what I wanted to express in the whole work in a kind of evolutionary process) will naturally be experienced by no one. It always strikes me as odd that most people, when they speak of ‘nature,’ will always think of only flowers, little birds, the scent of the forest, etc. Nobody knows of the god Dionysus, the great Pan. So there they already have a kind of program—that is, a sample of how I make music. It is always and everywhere only the sound of nature! This seems to me to be what Bülow once sensibly described to me as the ‘symphonic problem.’ I do not acknowledge another kind of program, at least not for my works. If I have now and then placed titles before them, I wished to set up some signposts for impressions where the same should be transferred to the imagination. If the word is necessary for this, then the articulated human voice is there, which can then realize the boldest intentions—precisely through the combination with the enlightening word! But now it is the world, nature as a whole, which is awakened, so to speak, from inscrutable silence to tones and sounds.”²⁹

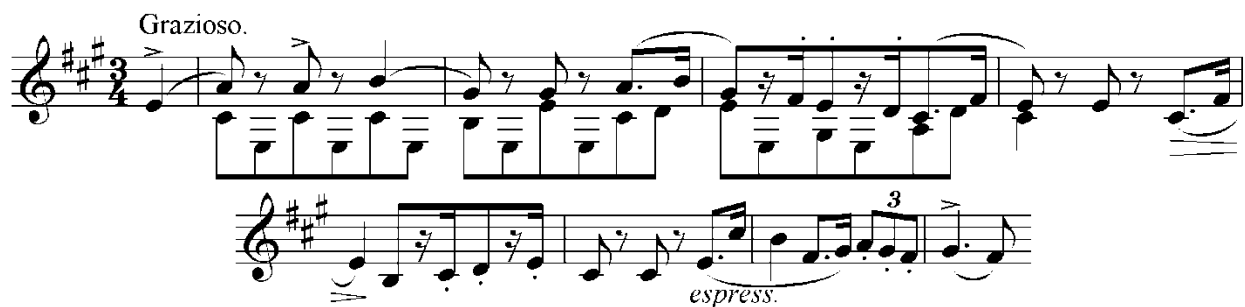
Although the harmlessness of the “flower piece” is here emphasized for an easily discernible intent, Mahler mixed in some shadows on other occasions. “How that will sound,”

he says in a conversation published by an unknown party, “no one can imagine it. It is the most carefree thing that I have ever written, as carefree as only flowers can be. It all oscillates and undulates in the heights in the lightest and most mobile way, and down in the depths without any heaviness, just as flowers in the wind also sway in a supple, playful way. Today I noticed to my own amazement that the basses only play *pizzicato* and do not have a single solid bow stroke, and the deep and strong percussion is not put into use. On the other hand, the violins, with charming use of the solo violin, have the most active, soaring, and graceful figures. Of course it does not all remain such a harmless floral cheeriness, rather everything suddenly becomes terribly serious and heavy: like a wind storm it blows across the meadow and shakes the leaves and blossoms, which groan and whimper on their stems as if they were pleading for redemption in a higher kingdom.” He admitted, the narrator explains further, that in the execution of this piece he was overcome by the most sinister shudders, far more than with the most tragic one, against which he would be able to arm and defend himself with humor and earnestness, whereas here, where he no longer considered the world from the standpoint of a struggling man (as in the First and Second Symphonies in contrast to the Third), but instead placed himself within its own essence, he felt all the fears of the world and of God.³⁰

These words carry in their expression and content an authentic character, and contain everything that can be said about the second movement. As with most of Mahler’s statements of this kind, they are not to be taken in the literal sense. [122] Above all, the forced programmatic application to the music of the poetic mood sketch that is provided is to be avoided. The reference, however, to the “sinister shudders” that a piece which is apparently only turned toward lovely things aroused in Mahler, highlights a deeply interpretive aspect. It shows how little

Mahler felt about only the cheerful exterior surface of things. He also perceived the unfathomable darker instincts, even in an apparently trifling play of characters, here perhaps even stronger and more gripping than otherwise, for the contrast between appearance and reality in precisely this simple world would necessarily become particularly perceptible to the thoughtful observer.

The layout of the movement corresponds in broad lines to that of the Andante from the Second Symphony. Here also, the underlying minuet tune begins “*grazioso*,” at first in a simple instrumentation: only an oboe melody and a single-voiced, rocking *pizzicato* accompaniment of violas or cellos:



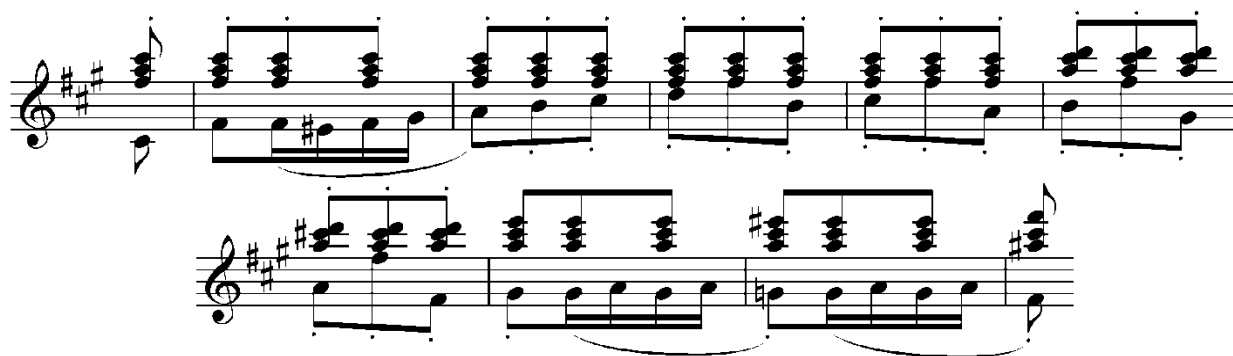
[Example 3-31: oboe, mm. 1-8; violas, mm. 1-4]

It is a picture of the flower that gracefully sways on its stem. The intermediate phrase directs it into somewhat more active rhythms:



[Example 3-32: first violins, mm. 19-23; flute and oboe, mm. 23-24; harp, mm. 19-24]

With the return of the opening theme, decorated with ornaments and placed on a stronger sonic ground by strings and woodwinds, the first song group is closed: the world of flowers as a self-sufficient, miraculous melodic phenomenon, only lightly moved from the outside. Now a stronger wave penetrates through this quiet world, an upward rolling F-sharp-minor theme in flutes and violas, spread over by lightly fluttering harmonies in violins and flutes:



[Example 3-33: violas, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th flutes, (and part of first violins for first four measures and upbeat), mm. 49-58]

The motion intensifies. An element of unrest has penetrated into the peaceful circle, and a new, tenderly urging theme is structured like a reorganization of the first F-sharp-minor idea:



[Example 3-34: half of second violins with flute doubling, mm. 69-73]

The F-sharp-minor theme rolls along toward E minor, where it is varied in $\frac{9}{8}$ meter with lively sixteenth-note motion, swarmed about by leaping string accompaniment figures that are struck *col legno*.³¹



[Example 3-35: oboes and clarinets, mm. 79-81]

The strings take up³² the motion in bouncing sixteenth notes, accompanied by stopped horns. Restrained agitation spreads itself out in the whispering of muted, abruptly starting, and then once again *pianissimo* scurrying instrumental voices.³³ Calming, smoothing, and unifying, the major-key melody of the opening returns again.³⁴ This time it unfolds with abundant ornamentation, broadly sings out, and closes again in a tenderly [123] expiring A major. But the unrest of the middle section is only repressed, not eliminated. Hardly has the A major faded away but the whispering of voices commences anew, beginning again with the F-sharp minor in $\frac{3}{8}$, jumping to $\frac{2}{4}$, “gradually somewhat more active” (“allmählich etwas bewegter”), obtaining ever stronger sweep, trilling, swirling as if with a puckish spirit, until “very suddenly leisurely” (“ganz plötzlich gemächlich”), with an abbreviated opening in E major, the minuet starts again. Only now does it unfold itself the full beauty of coaxing violin arabesques and gentle wind duets.

Then this last appearance dissolves, borne aloft by soaring violin runs, as if it were a delicate fragrance that slowly flies away in wisps of string harmonics.

Like the second movement, the third movement of this symphony is also related to the corresponding one of the previous symphony. Both have a scherzo character and are placed in a rondo form, and both are based on an earlier composed *Wunderhorn* song. Both are, according to the texts of the songs, “animal pieces.” This description certainly only fits the Fish Sermon Scherzo in an external way, for only the symbolic sense of the text comes into consideration for the symphony. The rondo of the Third Symphony is expressly described as an “animal piece” by Mahler, in contrast to the preceding “flower piece.” “What the Animals in the Forest Tell Me” (“Was mir die Tiere im Walde erzählen”) reads the heading. A higher step of organic being is reached. Loveliness and grace of the appearance, the beautiful illusion of that which is visible, these were the main attractions of the flower world. Now the diversity and mobility, the confusion of drives and instincts all come to the fore, in contrast to the simplicity of those natural moods upon whose fertile ground they play. The text of the song hardly gives an idea of the wealth of ideas that are stimulated. It is a simple eight-line poem with the heading “Ablösung im Sommer” (“Change [of the guard] in the Summer”):

Kuckuk hat sich zu Tode gefallen
An einer hohlen Weiden.
Wer soll uns diesen Sommer lang
Die Zeit und Weil vertreiben?
Ei, das soll tun Frau Nachtigall,
Die sitzt auf grünem Zweige.
Sie singt und springt, ist allzeit froh
Wenn andere Vögel schweigen.

Cuckoo has fallen to his death
On a hollow willow.
Who shall now the summer long
Pass the time for us?
Oh, for that lady nightingale will do.
She sits on a green branch.
She sings and leaps, is always happy
When other birds are silent.

It is a poem whose ideas mean almost absolutely nothing, and which can only be effective as a cause for making music. The whole is constructed upon simple contrasts: the four-line first verse is a humoristic lament with a minor-key flavor of parody, and the second is a naïve turn to major, full of high spirits. Mahler composed the song like this. It is found in the third book of the “Lieder aus der Jugendzeit” (“Songs from Youth”), and it comes from the time before 1892, therefore belonging to the earliest *Wunderhorn* compositions. The contrast between humoristic lament and harmless, happy joy in music making is perfectly accomplished. Minor and major are subtly demarcated and yet are internally tied beside one other. The voice, with the simplest direction—only eighth notes and rounding [124] sixteenth-note turns are used—shows a thorough objectivity of characterization. The accompaniment, even in the piano transcription,³⁵ is, though apparently monotonous and of unadorned modesty, rich in pulsating motion. It is a stylistic masterpiece on the narrowest scale. Essential for the effect is the apparently archaizing harmony, which strides downward in an austere, stepwise pattern at the threefold statement of “Weiden,” and is pervaded by augmented triads and chromatic progressions:



[Example 3-36: “Ablösung im Sommer,” voice and piano condensed to one staff, mm. 7-10, no vocal line in m. 10]³⁶

Mahler here makes extensive use of one of the most striking characteristics of his harmonic style: the abrupt alternation of major and minor. A common practice as an expression of sudden reversal in mood and feeling, it is, in the totally unexpected change as used by Mahler, a special,

internally determined idiosyncrasy—not only a nervous grimace, as it sometimes seems, but rather a surge of temperament that bubbles up out of a curious interweaving of intellect and feeling. It is found in highly emotional moments, such as the close of the first movement of the Second and particularly later in the symbolic fundamental motive of the Sixth Symphony. It is likewise found, with humoristic meaning, as a means of leaving the listener in uncertainty about the character of the mode, mocking him with major where he expects minor, giving him minor where the ear is directed to major, and thus, by constantly leading it astray, directing the imagination of the listener in a continuous zigzag. The first minor section of “Ablösung” alternates almost from harmony to harmony between minor and major, whereby the augmented triad occasionally enters in the place of major. Thus at the beginning of the third line with the characteristic performance indication of “*possierlich*” (“comical”):



[Example 3-37: “Ablösung im Sommer,” voice and right hand, mm. 17-21, with added low F from left hand in m. 21]

In comparison to this harmonic unrest, the major section obtains its musical color through the nearly uninterrupted sound of a pedal point on the tonic note. After the harmonic puzzle of the minor section, it gives the whole an expression of unwavering calm and harmonic certainty. In addition to these idiosyncrasies of a harmonic type come the highly characteristic melody and rhythm. It sounds like animal voices from the opening call:



[Example 3-38: “Ablösung im Sommer,” right hand, mm. 1-2],

from the already mentioned “Weiden,” from the stubborn and cheeky interlude:



[Example 3-39: “Ablösung im Sommer,” right hand, mm. 14-15],

and from the bouncing tune of the major section:



Ei! das soll tun Frau Nachtigall! die sitzt auf grünem Zweige

[Example 3-40: “Ablösung im Sommer,” vocal line, mm. 35-39]

In all of these inconspicuous motives is hidden a fruitful stimulus for the musician. One understands that Mahler was urged to transfer these details, first pressed into the tiny frame of the solo song, to the larger form of the symphonic movement. The experience justifies this desire. As fine as the vocal song presents itself, in comparison to the orchestral symphonic movement, it only has the effect of a matte draft. The instrumental garb is already an ingenious inspiration of a sonic fantasy stimulated by humor.³⁷ During the minor section the strings—without [125] contrabasses—remain exclusively in a bouncing *pizzicato* accompaniment. The clarinet first intones the bird call-like introductory motive:



[Example 3-41: clarinet, mm. 3-4]

Then the flute begins with the skipping melody:



[Example 3-42: flute (piccolo), mm. 5-8]³⁸

It is supplemented by a new calling motive in the oboe:



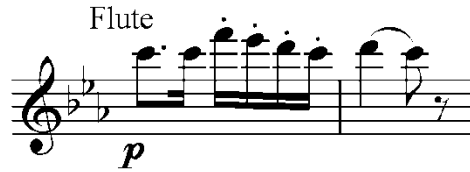
[Example 3-43: flute (piccolo) and oboe, mm. 9-11],

then led further by the E-flat clarinet:



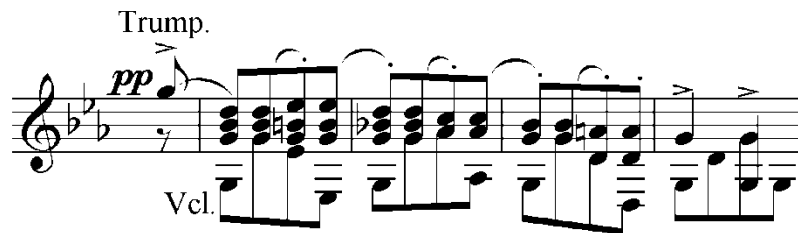
[Example 3-44: clarinets and E-flat clarinet, mm. 12-13],

and finally brought to an end by the regular flute:



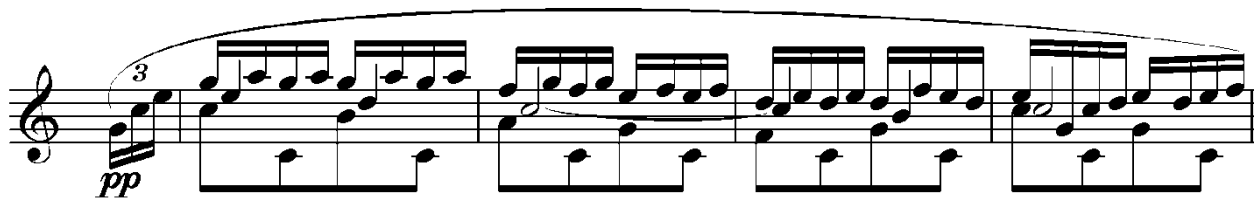
[Example 3-45: flute, 14-15]³⁹

A choir of varied voices is first heard in alternation, whereby naïvely humoristic effects are continually highlighted, as they are also emphasized by the interlude of the three trumpets with cello accompaniment:



[Example 3-46: trumpets and cellos, mm. 19-23]

The major portion, in compensation, belongs to the strings at the beginning. First violins, supported by the accompaniment of the seconds and the harp, flutter around the melody in sixteenth-note motion:



[Example 3-47: first and second violins, harp, mm. 33-37]

The buzzing and chirping string voices remain, even when the melody now comes forward in the interplay of oboe and clarinet in its original form:



[Example 3-48: oboe, mm. 37-41]

The horn intrudes, and the major-key song appears to turn back again to minor as the mood indecisively wavers:



[Example 3-49: first and second violins, mm. 57-60]

A firm, refrain-like choral conclusion of all woodwinds with powerful horn calls:



[Example 3-50: horns, mm. 61-64]

solidly rounds off the idyllic tableau. A new, groping group begins:



[Example 3-51: cellos, basses, bassoons, violas, first violins, mm. 68-71a; first violins only, mm. 71b-73]

In imitative entries, the theme propagates itself, including both strings and winds while driving to

lively accents. Bassoons lead back to the resumption, “again very leisurely as at the beginning” (“wieder sehr gemächlich, wie zu Anfang”). As before the woodwinds lead, but a scurrying counterpoint in muted violins now wraps itself around the melody in quadruple *piano*. It gives the whole a new coloration with a sinister streak. Melody and counterpoint obtain more animation and rise up into a crude grotesquerie of near wildness. Only the falling chromatic scale that leads into the major section [126] once again stabilizes the mood. This major section is, in contrast to the rich figuration of the minor section, held extremely plain in melody and ornamentation this time. Only the gently drawn chromatic internal lines of the trumpets, clarinets, and horns provide new, exciting and mysterious tones.⁴⁰ It is as if the world, which in the beginning moved so cheerfully and easily, gradually clouds over. The willful $\frac{6}{8}$ continuation is abbreviated and rushes quickly by, no longer really convincing of its joviality. A muted trumpet signal sounds:



[Example 3-52: muted trumpet, mm. 225-236]

“A little slower, but noticeably” (“Ein wenig, aber merklich, langsamer”), the minor melody spins itself out once more in the flutes, transposed to a darker F minor. But it does not reach its end. “Impudently” (“Frech”), the E-flat clarinet calls:



[Example 3-53: E-flat clarinet, mm. 243-247]

“Somewhat stronger than before” (“Etwas stärker als vorher”), the trumpet signal sounds:



[Example 3-54: muted trumpet and E-flat clarinet, mm. 248-253]

Once again in the E-flat clarinet and piccolo is the shrill, cheerful bird call—and then the animal world suddenly collapses. A new realm of dreams opens up, far from all life, the last secret of untouched, gently breathing nature. “As from a great distance” (“Wie aus weiter Ferne”), sounds out “very leisurely” (“sehr gemächlich”) and “freely performed” (“frei vorgetragen”), the “tune of a post horn” (“Weise eines Posthorns”), entwined by gently floating harmonies of the violins, which are split into three parts:



[Example 3-55: post horn, mm. 255-287]

It was both a peculiar and bold idea to set this folk tune, directly and without artistic

arrangement, as the trio in a symphonic scherzo. Yet the risk is successful. It is even this post horn episode that carries a romantic spell within itself, whose genuine naïveté captivates without resistance.⁴¹ Memories and fantasies are awakened that rapturously spin the post horn melody further in a folk style:



[Example 3-56: flutes, mm. 285-288]

The voices of birds quietly stir, and life sounds for a few moments into the dream world. Then the post horn begins once again, more sweetly, more wistfully. It is a farewell, somewhat sentimental as the folk style is after all, brimming over the heart with the magic of nature. And then a sudden, energetic conclusion, “fast and blaring like a fanfare” (“schnell und schmetternd wie eine Fanfare”): [127]



[Example 3-57: trumpet, mm. 345-347]

“With secretive haste” (“Mit geheimnisvoller Hast”), the animal piece begins again, the strings rustling with buzzing *tremolos* on the bridge, and the flute hurriedly following. The theme itself is not stated, only surmised from harmony, rhythm, and melodic hints. The piccolos whisper a chromatic theme, and the oboe crudely enters with the “impudent” motive of the E-flat clarinet.

The clarinet attempts to show humor:



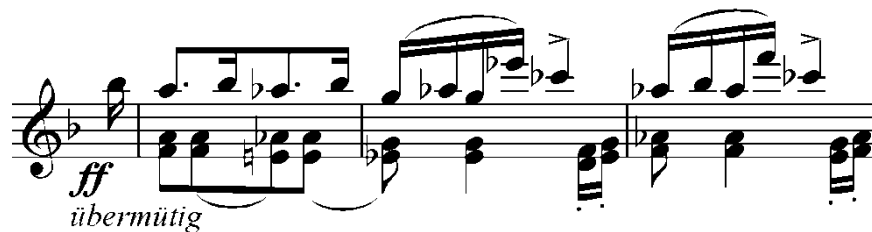
[Example 3-58: clarinet, mm. 366-369]

Suddenly, everything steers toward a “cheerful” (“lustig”) F major:



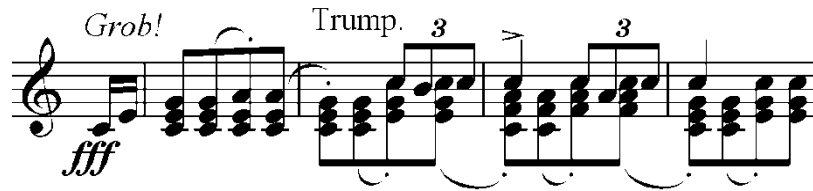
[Example 3-59: first and second flutes with some doubling from first clarinet, mm. 374-377]

“Boisterously” (“Übermütig”), violins and six horns exult:



[Example 3-60: first violins and horns, mm. 413-416]

A mad joy breaks out. The strings strike *col legno* while horns and trumpets flare up with crudely shouting chords and cheeky fanfare rhythms. The boisterous spirit builds up to general “rudeness” (“Grobheit”), in which the theme of the $\frac{6}{8}$ interlude also sounds again:



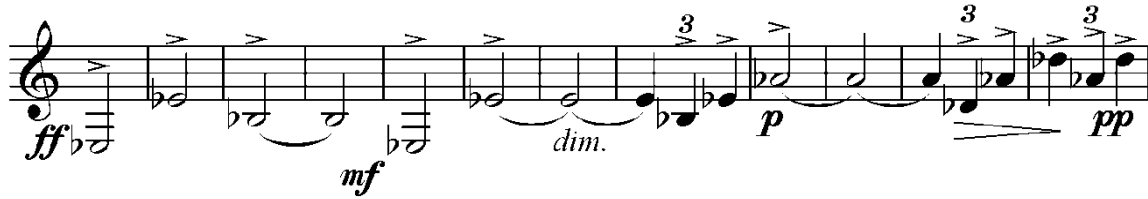
[Example 3-61: horns and trumpets, mm. 431-435, no trumpets on second beat of m. 435]

The mood becomes ever more boisterous as tempo, dynamics, and rhythm constantly drive, “very pressingly” (“sehr drängend”) “forward” (“vorwärts”). Then—a signal—the bird call as an answer—once again the signal—and everything falls silent. “Once again very leisurely, almost slowly” (“Wieder sehr gemächlich, beinahe langsam”), and also “freely following the feelings—as before” (“frei der Empfindung folgend—wie früher”), the post horn sings out. “As if hearkening thereafter” (“Wie nachhorchend”), the violins slowly sing, becoming more and more quiet:



[Example 3-62: top division of first violins, mm. 497-503]

Once again the post horn, accompanied by four natural horns. Once again the quiet magic of the forest. The horns sing to it a farewell into solitude. But now it breaks out: “lively again and faster than in the beginning” (“wieder lebhaft und schneller als im Anfang”). With raging voices and fearfully agitated bird calls, there gathers and presses upward a terribly piercing, woeful E-flat-minor *fortissimo* from all, with long resounding wind calls, pointing back to the elemental sounds of the first movement, reaching from E-flat minor to D-flat major:⁴²



[Example 3-63: horns and trombones, mm. 545-556]

Then an unnoticeable slide back toward C major. The post horn fanfare becomes the awakening call to the amusing animal images, to the delicate and tender humors in this circle of life. With a cheerful *crescendo* and a joyful summation, the movement storms to its conclusion.

The second movement was called “What the Flowers on the Meadow Tell Me,” the third “What the Animals in the Forest Tell Me.” What have the flowers and animals told? The flowers have told about the quiet cheerfulness and grace of the present, the animals about the pleasures of joyful and vigorous living, but also about its secretive [128] depths. A shadow fell over this realm of life, about which the flowers on the meadow still know nothing. The animals in the forest, however, in whom the consciousness of pain and joy is already lively, know it: it is sorrow. Sorrow has come into the world; it has risen in proportion to the upward evolution of life forms, for the level of ability to suffer determines the frequency of its appearances. The confrontation with sorrow, the question of its subjugation, and still more—its fertility—becomes the fundamental question of life. So man now tells of sorrow and of that which conquers sorrow and makes it the source of new life. He tells it with the words from Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*:

O Mensch!	O Man!
Gib acht!	Give heed!
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?	What does deep midnight speak?

Ich schlief, ich schlief!	I slept, I slept!
Aus tiefem Traum bin ich erwacht!	I have been awakened from a deep dream!
Die Welt ist tief!	The world is deep!
Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht!	And deeper than the day has imagined!
Tief ist ihr Weh!	Deep is its suffering!
Lust—tiefer noch als Herzeleid!	Desire—deeper still than heart's sorrow!
Weh spricht: Vergeh!	Woe speaks: pass away!
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit!	Yet all desire wants eternity!
Will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!	Wants deep, deep eternity!

In relation to the other movements, this song is the most closely connected piece in the symphony. In the conversations referred to, Mahler once said: “Out of the large connections between the individual movements that I imagined at the beginning, nothing has emerged; each stands as a complete and individual whole for itself, without repetitions or reminiscences. Only at the close of the animal piece does the heavy shadow once again fall that was oppressively cast at the end of the introduction by lifeless nature and by still uncrystallized inorganic matter. The meaning, however, is really more of a relapse into the deeper, more animal forms of being before making the colossal jump into the intellect of the highest form of earthly life, humanity.”⁴³

Mahler’s statement about the independence of the individual movements does not apply to the fourth. Here are indisputable connections to what has gone before. One could think that Mahler hardly became aware of them, so effortlessly do they emerge from the artistic situation. The opening already falls back upon the introduction to the first movement, upon the quiet, dark oscillation of the low wind harmonies. The remembrance of the dead matter is evoked through the opening thought:

O Mensch, gib acht!	O man, give heed!
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?	What does deep midnight speak?
Ich schlief, ich schlief!	I slept, I slept!

The conception of sleep and also of mankind within this matter stirs the memory to the very beginning of the act of awakening, and the main motive of sleeping nature enters as a solo for muted string basses as a kind of motto at the opening of this movement:



[Example 3-64: bass line, harp, cellos, basses, mm. 1-3]

At the entry of the mystical [129] harmonies, the singing voice suddenly sounds “with secretive expression” (“mit geheimnisvollem Ausdruck”):



[Example 3-65: voice and reduction of accompanying harmonies (horns and strings), mm. 11-14]⁴⁴

With that, the fundamental musical character of the movement is indicated. It is a freely recited vocal piece whose melodic structure is first born of primeval sounds, calls of nature, and free-floating harmonies, as it were, and slowly condensed into a definite appearance. The process of Becoming from the first movement is started again, but directed toward a different goal: not toward the emergence of instinct, but rather toward the awakening of the psyche. The mystical introductory harmonies dissolve into the quietly rocking D major of the string basses. Over this, isolated long-held harmonies in alternating registers emerge in curious and atmospheric mixtures of sounds: high trombones with bass harp notes, violin and harp harmonics combined with

piccolos in their deepest register. In languorous chains of thirds from the horns, a melodic kernel presses to the forefront:



[Example 3-66: horns 1 and 3, mm. 24-27]

The voice continues the line further:



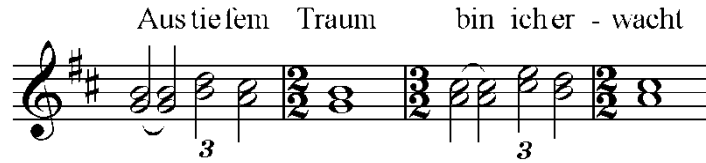
[Example 3-67: voice and horns 1 and 3, mm. 29-32]

The melody, however, cannot yet gain a solid shape. “Like a sound of nature” (“Wie ein Naturlaut”), it is heard sighing from the oboe:⁴⁵



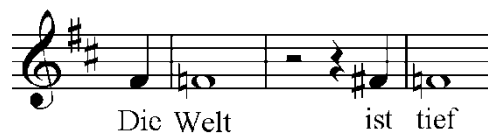
[Example 3-68: oboe, mm. 32-35]

The broken atmospheric harmonies sound again: “Ich schlief—ich schlief” (“I sleep—I sleep”)—a mystical immersion in the dimming primordial state of being, the nature calls. But now it stirs, striving upward:



[Example 3-69: voice with clarinets, mm. 45-48]

Again, the upswing falters. “Die Welt ist tief” (“The world is deep”)—major and minor alternate two times in succession at the thought of dream and reality:



[Example 3-70: voice, mm. 49-52]

“Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht” (“And deeper than day has imagined”). Here sounds the promise, at first only in the orchestra. The words still fail for that which is deeper than the day and deeper than anything else: desire and eternity:

[Example 3-71: violins, mm. 57-67; horn 1 part added, mm.65-67]

The flowering melody breaks off, the painful nature call sounds anew, and again the warning question “O Mensch!” (“O man!”). It is again given an answer from the first movement:



[Example 3-72: voice, mm. 100-101 and violin solo, mm. 101-103]

But now, anew, the promise:



[Example 3-73: voice, mm. 107-110]

And now the battle of woe with desire: “Weh spricht: Vergeh!” (“Woe speaks: pass away!”) It blooms up with irresistible liberating power. The motive of woe changes to major and it becomes a deeply internalized swelling melody that now has found its dimension and its shape:



[Example 3-74: voice, mm. 119-129]

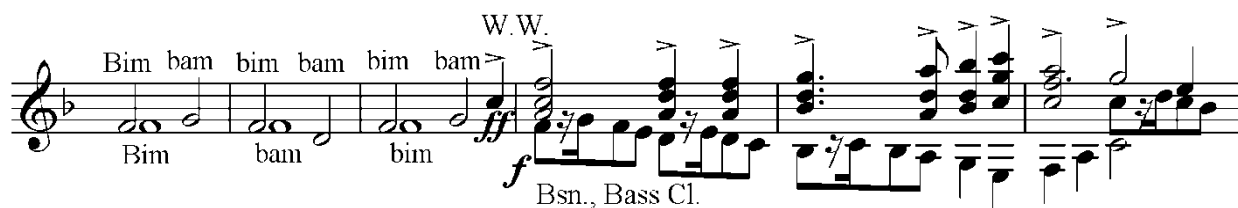
[130] **Mankind** told of the slumber of the world, of the grief of the world, of the desire that is deeper than heart’s sorrow, and of deep eternity. The nature theme has become the liberating theme of the soul, and matter has been overcome. Here the line of the Third Symphony crosses that of the Second. That “Sterben werd’ ich um zu leben” (“I shall die in

order that I may live”) awakens again in this moment. Yet this is only in the idea, for the path of the Third leads to a freer height than the ecstasy of the Finale of the Second. The overcoming of pain is no longer a fundamental problem; it was only an episode of the ascent. The soul is free, it has found and recognized itself, it has balanced pain and pleasure of the world against each other, and it has recognized pleasure as the deeper of them. Now it swings itself further upward, to a higher circle, in order to experience which pain still exists above the pain of the world and how this pain can be overcome. This is what the angels tell.

Mahler did not transfer the *Wunderhorn* song that now follows—it joins itself to the fourth movement without interruption—from an earlier composition into the symphony, rather he wrote it specifically for this purpose. The setting is already of a peculiar kind: boys’ choir, women’s choir, and with them an orchestra in which woodwinds, horns, and harps dominate. The strings are completely absent at the beginning, and later, at the antiphonal singing of the choir, the deep string instruments up to the violas enter. Violins are not used at all. The singing voices are used in an unusually instrumental manner: the boys’ choir sings throughout, apart from a few measures, in a “Bim-Bam” that is held in the intervals of a tolling bell, and the women’s choir takes occasional part in this later on. “The tone is to imitate the sound of a bell; the vowel is to be briefly pronounced and the tone is to be held out by the humming of the consonant M” (“Der Ton ist dem Klang einer Glocke nachzuahmen, der Vokal kurz anzuschlagen und der Ton durch den Konsonanten M summend auszuhalten”), prescribes Mahler. He did not think of a specifically vocal, rather a purely sonic, almost instrumental effect. The four high bells, which sound in the same register with the boys’ voices, confirm the curiously atmospheric, one could say genderless character of the human voice.⁴⁶

The choice of such a tone color, joining with the wind band into a curiously ascetic austerity, emerged from the character of the poem. It is headed “Armer Kinder Bettlerlied” (“Poor Children’s Begging Song”), and is separated into three sections. The introductory first verse depicts the joy of the angels regarding the forgiveness of Peter’s sins. The middle three verses, reaching farther back, tell of Peter’s grief over his sins and statements of grace from Jesus. The last verse brings praise of heavenly joy and eternal salvation. Mahler laid out the composition approximately corresponding to this structure. The basic atmosphere of the presentation is “Cheerful in tempo and cheeky in expression” (“Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck”). This basic atmosphere is consciously implemented, despite a rich and delicate structuring of details, particularly in the middle section. There is no sentimentality, no ardent indulgence of feeling in this piece. Here a pure and somewhat cooler temperature of the soul than before, in relation to the arousal of the heart, is predominant. The representation of sorrow also obtains a mellower, almost peaceful undertone. [131] Passion as an internally moving element steps back, and a sharper gift of observation, a more objective type of experience comes into play. Human subjectivity is overcome—the angels now tell the story. Tragedy in the human sense is foreign to their sphere. Even where the content of their narrative touches on deeply serious things, the freedom of a humor that is internally superior to those things remains in the tone of their depiction.

So commences the song of the angels, immediately following the fading out of the “drunken song,” with the fresh and bright “Bim-Bam” of the boys and the bells:



[Example 3-75: boys' choir and bells, mm. 1-3; flutes, clarinets, bass clarinet and bassoon, mm. 3-6]

It serves as a novel prelude for the following main melody in the wind band. The melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic type of the piece is thereby determined in a few measures. “Cheekily” (“Keck”), the three-voice women’s chorus—at first in unison—enters with the first verse:

Es sun - gen drei En - gel ei nen sü - ßen Ge - sang, mit Freu - den es se - lig in den
Him - mel klang, sie jauchzten fröh lich auch da - bei daß Pe - trus sei von
Sün - den frei, er sei von Sün - den frei, er sei von Sün - den frei, von
Sün - den frei, von Sün - den frei

[Example 3-76: women’s choir, mm. 6-21, text “Es sangen drei Engel einen süßen Gesang, / Mit Freuden es selig in den Himmel klang. / Sie jauchzten fröhlich auch dabei, / Daß Petrus sei von Sünden frei!” (“Three angels sang a sweet song / That blessedly rang in heaven with joy. / At the same time, they also joyfully shouted / That Peter was free from sins!”)]⁴⁷

The melody contains a contrasting pair: the cheeky opening narrative and the mystical harmonic

sequences at the reference to Peter's deliverance from sin. These four inner measures are followed by a new, jubilant upswing with the opening rhythm in the lower voices and firm, confidently rising leaps of a fourth in the leading sopranos.

These two opposites—the cheerful narrative tone and the solemn harmonic sequence—remain decisive for the further course of the song.

Und als der Herr Jesus zu Tische saß,
Mit seinen zwölf Jüngern
das Abendmahl aß,

And as the Lord Jesus sat at the table
And, with his twelve disciples,
ate the last supper,

sounds fresh and lively from the choir, but then suddenly changes tone again:

Was stehst du denn hier? Was stehst du denn hier?

Da sprach der Herr Je - - sus, Herr Je - - - - - sus:

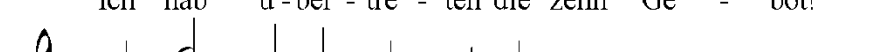
Wenn ich dich an - seh', so wei - nest du mir, so wei - nest du mir!

[Example 3-77: women's choir, mm. 25-35, text "Da sprach der Herr Jesus: 'Was stehst du denn hier? / Wenn ich dich anseh', so weinest du mir!' ("Then the Lord Jesus said: 'Why do you stand here? / When I look at you, you weep to me!'")]

There now follows a turn that becomes poignant through the simplicity of the expressive change.

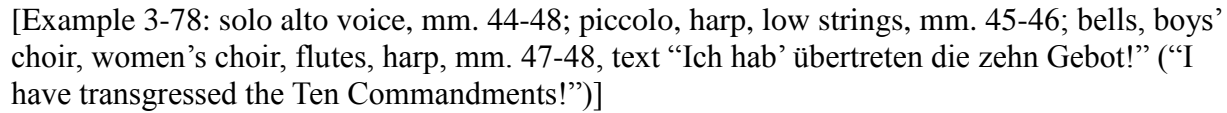
In an unnoticeable holding back of the tempo, with broadly bowed, quiet harmonies and for the first time in the course of this [132] piece, the violas enter, their elegiac tone color particularly striking against the fresh, grainy wind tone. To fearfully throbbing minor harmonies in eighth-

Ich hab' ü - ber - tre - ten die zehn Ge - bot!



Bim bam bim bam

[Example 3-78: solo alto voice, mm. 44-48; piccolo, harp, low strings, mm. 45-46; bells, boys' choir, women's choir, flutes, harp, mm. 47-48, text "Ich hab' übertreten die zehn Gebot!" ("I have transgressed the Ten Commandments!")]



Ich gehe und weine ja bitterlich, Ach komm und erbarme dich über mich!	I go and weep bitterly, Ah, come and have mercy upon me!
---	---

its original harmless merriment, but rather drawn into painful turns and sharpened in its expression of sorrow by chromatic contrapuntal lines—until the quiet winding down of the agitation facilitates the return of the sprightly narrative tone:

Hast Du den übertreten	Have you then transgressed
die zehen Gebot,	the Ten Commandments,
So fall' auf die Knie und bitte ⁴⁸ zu Gott!	So fall on your knees and pray to God!
Liebe nur Gott in alle Zeit!	Love only God at all times!
So wirst du erlangen die himmlische Freud',	So shall you reach the heavenly joy,
Die himmlische Freud', die selige Stadt.	The heavenly joy, the blissful city.
Die himmlische Freude war Petro bereit't:	The heavenly joy was prepared for Peter:



[Example 3-79: women's choir, cellos, and basses (boys' choir and trombones not included), mm. 99-103, text "Durch Jesum und Allen zur Seligkeit." ("Through Jesus, and to all for their blessed salvation.")]

The mystical chord progressions are again woven in at the corresponding passages of the text. In the closing lines, the music takes a glorious, youthfully fresh upward sweep. And then an austere forceful wind epilogue closes the curtain over this musical scene, which in its mixture of budding childhood and deeply secretive intimacy is also unique among Mahler's songs. Under the quietly fading Bim-Bam of the choir, the tender light slowly expires. Only a harp and viola harmonic tone, as well as the quadrupled piccolos, continue to sound. While the chorus of angels also sinks deeper and deeper, the path leads upward without interruption into the last, highest circle: into the realm of love, which opens up with a "slowly, peacefully, and heartfelt" ("langsam, ruhevoll, empfunden") singing violin melody: [133]⁴⁹



[Example 3-80: Finale, first violins, mm. 1-8 and upbeat (with second violin doubling, mm. 1-4)]

It is one of those melodies of Mahler that may come to periodic resolving cadences, but arrive at no actual close.⁵⁰ They stream out such a wealth of melodic force, richness of sound, and euphonious joy that they continually reveal new formations on their own. Every apparent close is at the same time the beginning of a new line of sound. They wake the feeling of an overflowing strength that can never be exhausted. Something similar was the far-reaching D-flat-major theme in the Finale of the First Symphony. But there it stood in the middle of a final movement that was overcrowded with explosive material. Here in the Third, the construction is different. The song as the last, highest revelation, the melody as the noblest design remains the only ruler. It obtains the right and possibility to grow and to unfold itself as is required by the strength that resides within it. Everything else is dismissed. The conflicts are ended and the problematic is resolved. Those things that remain and sound into the song are only reminiscences. They do not inhibit its spread, but only exalt its inner strength. In this victory of melody, of the pure, peaceful song, in this overcoming of even the last dissonant, distant sounds is revealed, as seen from the musician, that of which love tells. It tells of the resolution of all discord, of the inexhaustible fullness of new and miraculous manifestations. It tells of a strength that finds no beginning and no end, which eternally flows and rushes on. In this flowing and rushing it spans the arc of a single hymnal melody, the melody of life, of fulfillment.

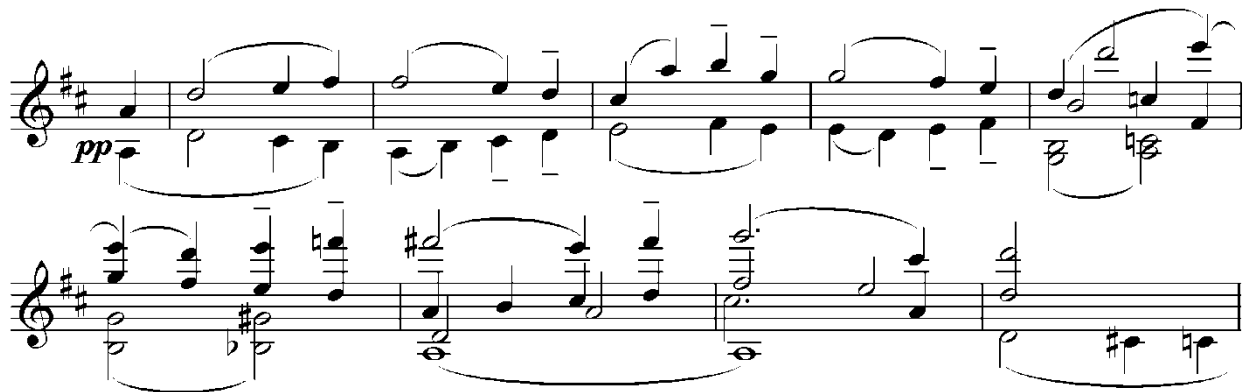
Thus does the D-major melody of the final Adagio swing in inexhaustible fullness from

its gentle beginnings up until its glorious, organ-like conclusion. The first violins, accompanied only by the string section, begin *pianissimo*, rising slowly from step to step over an octave and a half on the rich, full sound of the G string. “Very expressive and stately” (“Sehr ausdrucksvoll und getragen”), cellos and then second violins join in:⁵¹



[Example 3-81: top voice of cellos, mm. 8-12, joined by top voice of violas in m. 12; second violins, mm. 12-20]

It gradually sings from multiple voices. The accompanying sequence of simple harmonies changes into an antiphonal song: from the cellos is heard the opening melody, and from the first violins a counterpoint that rises in a grand arch:



[Example 3-82: first violins and top voice of cellos, mm. 20-24; first and second violins, joined by harmonies and doubling from violas and cellos, mm. 25-29]

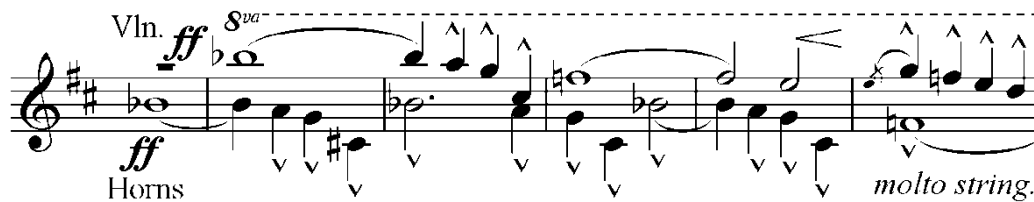
After this first ascent, which is still dynamically kept in gentle colors, the melody sinks back into

a quiet twilight, out of which a new minor-key idea steps forward:



[Example 3-83: divided first violins, mm. 41-45, joined by lower violas, mm. 43-45]

Imperceptibly pressing forward, it obtains melodic breadth, draws strength from the opening theme unto itself, and then steers suddenly back into an earlier sphere: the motive of opposition from the first movement, [134] which there had twice threatened the development, here rises up anew with “passionate” (“leidenschaftlich”) intensification.⁵²



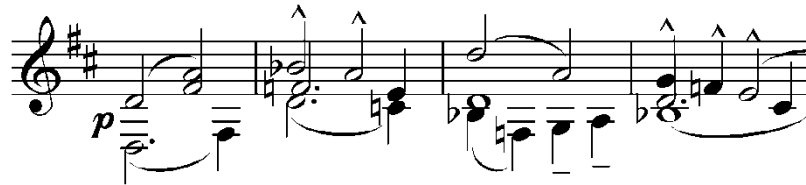
[Example 3-84: horns, mm. 74-79; first violins, mm. 75-79]

Only horns contrast with the string orchestra. Searching, weakening under the force of the contradiction, the dissonant suspension on F fades away as the last sound. The cellos take it up and lead it “very songfully” (“sehr gesangvoll”) back into the “peaceful” (“ruhevoll”) D-major sphere:



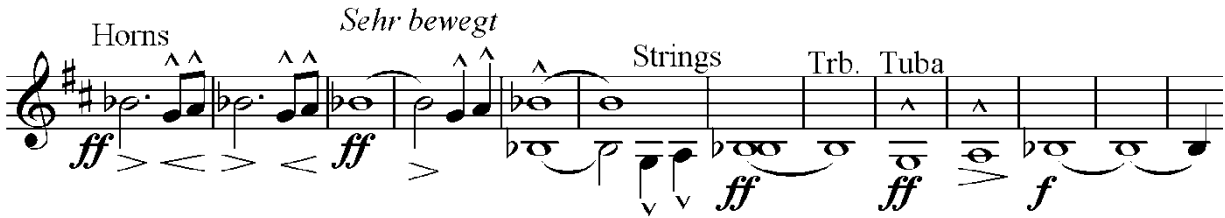
[Example 3-85: top voice of cellos, mm. 91-95]

Now the voices of the woodwinds also awake, from which to this point only the oboe had been heard episodically. Like a soft organ register the countermelody lays itself out in the unison of flute, oboe, and clarinet over the upward swelling violin song—a sonic picture of ideal balance and of deeply peaceful, intimately inspired feeling. For the second time the minor theme quietly urges its way in, this time directly following upon the major song, and assigned to the horns:



[Example 3-86: clarinets and horns, mm. 124-127]

The “somewhat more active” (“etwas bewegter”) mood strengthens and grows. In a syncopated, troubled C-sharp-minor passage, it becomes “gradually more passionate” (“allmählich leidenschaftlicher”), pressing “unnoticeably forward” (“unmerklich vorwärts”). Motivic segments of the opening melody and the minor theme combine and intensify. C-sharp minor changes to A-flat minor and strives “very passionately” (“sehr leidenschaftlich”) further toward E-flat minor. The voices, which originally entered hesitantly, gather themselves to an orchestral mass. Horns and trumpets take the lead. Out of the passionate, seething tangle of voices an appearance from the past rises up in a gigantic way: that painful conclusion of the awakening call from the first movement:



[Example 3-87: all horns, mm. 180-187; first violins, mm. 184-187; four horns, trombone, tuba, mm. 188-192]

Once a call to life when it was applied to liberate it from the dullness of inflexible mater, it works within this highest sphere like a *memento mori*. Its passionate motion now only retains a reminiscence of evolutionary battles that have long been overcome. This reminiscence violently presses itself once more to the forefront, directed to the “highest strength” (“höchste Kraft”), enlarging itself like an echo. “With much motion” (“Sehr bewegt”), at double the tempo of the opening, it once again seeks to wake all that which had once existed in passion and longing, and which could now draw back the highest love that is striving toward transfiguration into the battles of the lower circles and the imperfect forms:

Example 3-88 is a musical score for a full orchestra. It features four staves: W.W., Strings (top), Trump. (second), and Horns (bottom). The tempo is marked 'Mit höchster Kraft' and 'Immer drängender'. The W.W., Strings part starts with a forte (ff) dynamic and includes several accents (^) and slurs. The Trump. and Horns parts enter later with ff and f dynamics respectively. The score includes various articulation marks such as accents, slurs, and dynamic markings.

[Example 3-88: full orchestral reduction, mm. 219-228, with some harmonies in trumpets, winds, and strings omitted from m. 223 ff.]

Now, however, it rises up like a halo that is fired from a tender glow into a bright flame. [135] *Tremolos* in the violins lie over the pedal point A that rests deep below in the string basses, and to this are added four-part brass in a whispered sound: the opening melody in the trumpet, the counterpoint in the trombone, with middle voices in the second and third trumpets. The dynamics swell, and the tone color shines more strongly. The violins still remain on the shimmering *tremolo*, woodwinds become silent, and only trumpets and trombones gather their strength. It is an impetus that seems to come from inexhaustible sources of an otherworldly power, until the hymn of life sounds out with grandiose might from the full orchestra in triple *forte*. A chorale in which everything joins that has breath. A song in praise of the creative force of love. This is the Divine. Through this force of love, it arrives at recognition and revelation. This message resounds in ever higher striving, never flagging strength, as if from all the ranks of a gigantic organ, solemnly above the earth.

Mahler was 36 years old when he completed the Third Symphony. He created several others whose endings proclaim liberation and happiness. He did not again arrive, however, at such a joyful, harmonious feeling of life. Here he touched for the first time on the cosmic sources of his being. Here he looked at himself for the first time in the reflection of his art, cleansed from the dark clouds of tragic personal experience. Such a self-revelation is only given once in life, even to the genius artist. What the “Eroica” meant for Beethoven, this corresponding Third Symphony also meant for Mahler. Here is the conclusion of that development which is determined by the battle for recognition and consolidation of personality, for conscious understanding of the artistic mission, for the achievement of an individual world

view. This world view of Mahler is represented in the Third Symphony. It is won from the battles experienced in the two preceding works. As it appears here, it remained the foundation for Mahler's later creative output: the confession of faith in the eternally youthful creative force of nature. In its profound adherence to rules, it knows no coincidence. Cause and effect are predetermined in the smallest detail. All that occurs is determined logically in the sense of natural law and is a necessary consequence. Even man with his single destiny fits into this overwhelmingly great event. He also is a product of nature, in himself no more valuable and no more important than a flower, its superior only through the capability of recognizing the power of love that bears all things. This faith in the creative, receiving, determining power of love is the prize of the path from the First through the Third Symphony. It is the confession upon which Mahler holds fast in defiance of all new variations, all doubts, and all experiences up until the Eighth Symphony, where this faith breaks through as an ecstatic proclamation, and further on to the farewell works, *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony, where the individual existence bleeds to death, but faith remains. The deep religiosity is born from this faith. It gives Mahler's musical language its own consecration, the magic of an authenticity touching upon the nature of things. What is it that bestows upon a melody like that of the closing Adagio of the Third Symphony such an intimate force of expression that strikes the innermost of feelings? The line itself stands out, [136] as with several other ideas of Mahler, in no way because of an originality of direction, and the harmony avoids anything unusual. If one wished to dissect this melody in a purely technical sense, one would find that it belongs to a widespread family. And yet there lives in the nature of its effect a certain something that places it far away from everything else and gives it power to touch that which is most distant and deep, to invoke

feelings that remain unattainable for every other formulation, as similar as it may sound. Here it is also not the materials made manifest in sound, it is the ideal strength in the imagination of the sound which creates such mysterious connections and revivals. That which forms the basis of this ideal strength and gives it an internal impulse, however, is the strength of humanity and of religious faith. This humanity, this faith alone could cause a great art to arise, and could give the symphony a new possibility of existence, new content, and new form as an artistic manifestation of the genre.

With the draft and the execution of the Third Symphony, Mahler completely solved the problem of the new symphonic style for the first time, without a tragic struggle, without a titanic revolt, without self-destruction and blood sacrifice—solely from the free force of creation arriving at itself. With the solemn, transfigured apotheosis of love as the witness, the source, and the very basis of all existence, the work concludes. This most intense excitement gives birth to Mahler's most inwardly serene creation as a counterpart. Now "the child" tells the tale of the heavenly joys: the Fourth Symphony.

NOTES

- 1 As indicated in the chapter on the Second Symphony, Mahler did this for that symphony as well on three separate occasions, including one for a performance in Berlin. Bekker was almost certainly aware of at least some details of these Second Symphony programs, which were, in fact, devised “after the fact,” just as was the program for the First. See pp. 241-42 and 245, notes 8 and 41.
- 2 The literature on the Third Symphony is rich with excellent material about the important topic of program music. Peter Franklin provides a stimulating discussion of the philosophical background for the symphony, including the important cultural and political considerations, Mahler’s changing attitude toward Nietzsche, and the work’s reception history. See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3* (Cambridge Music Handbooks. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), especially pp. 3-33. Franklin also contributed a more recent article on this topic in 1999, “A Stranger’s Story: Programmes, Politics, and Mahler’s Third Symphony” in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 171-86. One of Franklin’s more interesting topics is that of other philosophical and political influences beyond Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, such as the poetry of Mahler’s friend Siegfried Lipiner. He also discusses the work of William J. McGrath, who placed the Third Symphony in the context of Leftist politics in late nineteenth-century Vienna (see *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974]). Morten Solvik’s 1992 dissertation, “Culture and the Creative Imagination: The Genesis of Gustav Mahler’s Third Symphony (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1992, 2 vols.), also deals with many of the same topics discussed by Franklin. More recently, Timothy David Freeze wrote a dissertation that explores the topic of popular styles in the symphony and their relation, or lack of relation, to programmatic ideas. See “Gustav Mahler’s Third Symphony: Program, Reception, and Evocations of the Popular” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2010).
- 3 The repetition of both the Roman numeral “III” and the title (“Was mir die Dämmerung erzählt”) are given as in Bekker. In later literature, Bekker is cited as the sole source for this and the following sketch. Freeze, in an extensive discussion of all program drafts, refers to them as “Bekker I” and “Bekker II” (Freeze, Ph.D. diss., pp. 260-62). The contents of these sketches were also transmitted by Alma in a slightly different form (See Franklin, *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 41 and Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], p. 84). Donald Mitchell surmises that the Bekker and Alma versions “did *not* derive from the same documentary sources but have independent status, though the second draft programme is virtually identical in either case” (*Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* [London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1975; Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976], p. 286, n. 72). This seems to be contradicted, however, by Bekker himself, who states in the “Anmerkungen” that the two program drafts are “in the possession of Mrs. Alma Maria Mahler.” Unlike the similar program sketch for the Fourth Symphony reproduced later on by Bekker, also for the first time (see p. 336 and p. 390, note 15), neither of these program drafts for the Third has survived.
- 4 This letter is found in its entirety in *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, revised and edited by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and Hamburg, Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), pp. 159-60 (Letter 175). There, the date is surmised to be June 12 (a Friday, indicated by Mahler) rather than June 24 (a Wednesday). The first edition of letters released by Alma in 1924 indicated June 24, and since Bekker also refers to this date, it presumably also appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse*, where Mildenburg herself had published the letters in 1916, as indicated by Bekker in the *Anmerkungen*.
- 5 Mahler said that this programmatic motto for the Adagio Finale, which appears in the 1896 manuscript of the symphony, came from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (see the letter to Friedrich Löhr from August 29, 1895 in *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 127-28 [Letter 146]), but the epigraph is not found in this form anywhere in the collection.

Peter Franklin describes it as being “adapted” from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (Mahler: *Symphony No. 3*, p. 71). Carl Niekerk identifies the likely source of the couplet as the poem “Erlösung,” either misremembered or rewritten. There, two of the couplets read “Mein Kind, sieh an die Brüste mein, / Kein Sünder laß verloren sein” (“My child, look at my breasts, / Let no sinner be lost”) and “Vater, laß dir die Wunden mein / Ein Opfer für die Sünde sein” (“Father, allow my wounds / To be an offering to you for sin”). See “Mahler Contra Wagner: The Philosophical Legacy of Romanticism in Gustav Mahler’s Third and Fourth Symphonies” in *The German Quarterly* 77/2 (2004), pp. 188-209 (p. 207, n. 34).

- 6 This famous and important letter is found in *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 166-67 (Letter 181).
- 7 In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 168-69 (Letter 183).
- 8 In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 169-70 (Letter 184). It is dated July 9.
- 9 In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 163-64 (Letter 179). Blaukopf gives evidence that the letter (which the manuscript states was written on a Saturday) comes from late June, probably June 27, rather than July 10 (a Friday), as indicated in the 1924 edition of letters as well as, presumably, in the *Neue Freie Presse*. This letter, then, is earlier than the three preceding ones quoted by Bekker (for which the July dates are not in question).
- 10 In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 164-66 (Letter 180). Everything after “In such moments I no longer belong to myself” is not actually in this letter, and was added to it in the 1924 publication (and again, presumably in the *Neue Freie Presse*). The passage from “The creator of such a work suffers terrible labor pains . . .” comes from an undated letter fragment. The passage from “My symphony will be something the world has never yet heard!” to the end comes from a letter written on a Monday, which Blaukopf presumes to be June 29. The first publication of the hybrid “letter” gave a date of July 18, a Saturday. The first part of the letter, given as Blaukopf No. 180, is indicated by Mahler as being written on a Sunday. If the later portion dated “Monday” is from June 29, then the first passage would almost certainly come from June 28. Thus, this passage and the previous one quoted by Bekker come from three consecutive days in late June and predate the three letters from early July that Bekker quotes before them, but they are later than the first letter he quotes (Blaukopf No. 175). In the letter given by Blaukopf as No. 180, following the text that was originally published and several intervening sentences is a full list of the movement titles in what is more or less their final form. Since this portion was not published and was replaced by fragments of other letters, Bekker would not have seen this list. Mahler indicates that he is about to finish the present first movement, which he gives as two movements: “Was mir das Felsgebirge erzählt” (“What the Rocks and Mountains Tell Me”) and “*Der Sommer marschiert ein!*” (“*Summer Marches In!*”). He indicates these with the Roman numerals I and II. There is no reference to Pan. This fits with the revised dating of the letters, where the one discussing the indistinct postmark (Blaukopf No. 184) would be later than this one. He then gives the remaining five movements with their familiar and final titles, stating that all are finished, but he repeats the Roman numeral III for the present second and third movements, arriving at a total number of six and ending with “Was mir die Liebe erzählt!” At the end of the letter, or at least at the end of the portion that has survived, since a final greeting and signature is lacking, Mahler indicates the complete title: “*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft / Ein Sommermittagstraum*” (“*The Happy Science / A Summer Noonday’s Dream*”). As seen at the beginning of the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, Bekker’s source for the first part of the title was Natalie Bauer-Lechner’s then anonymous diary (see p. 325 and p. 389, note 2). The title given here is a more direct reference to Nietzsche’s *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* than *Meine fröhliche Wissenschaft*, as given in the Bauer-Lechner material.
- 11 In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 170-71 (Letter 185). This is indeed the latest letter quoted by Bekker, and it actually

was written on July 21. Bekker's speculative construction of a chronology based on letters with partially incorrect (fabricated?) dates is impressive and admirable.

- 12 The symphony's genesis is also explored in depth by Franklin (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 37-52), Mitchell (*The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 187-94 and 286-88), and Floros (*The Symphonies*, pp. 83-93). Primary sources, including the Mildenburg letters, the Bauer-Lechner diary, and the various stages of the program draft, provide more insight into the composition of this symphony than is available for any of the others.
- 13 The title of the penultimate chapter of the last part of *Zarathustra*, "Das trunkene Lied," is used to describe the poem set by Mahler, which appears in that chapter.
- 14 This is Mahler's second use of this beater, or switch. See the chapter on the Second Symphony, p. 244, note 31. As elsewhere, the German term is retained.
- 15 Bekker's points on formal analysis here are partly confirmed and partly disputed by later analyses. Virtually all analysts today place the beginning of the main movement (and the exposition) at m. 273, or rehearsal number 23. This also establishes the "main theme" as the major-key transformation of the Dorian-mode opening horn call at the movement's outset. Mahler places a double bar at this point. The moment of arrival, however striking, does not come after one of the many points where the movement has come to a grinding halt, but in the middle of the flow as the first march is beginning to be established, which does fit with Bekker's description of an indistinct boundary. Bekker grudgingly seems to admit that a sonata structure does underlie the movement (which is confirmed by the highly unusual, but undeniably clear moment of recapitulation). Franklin, quoting a Bauer-Lechner conversation, uses Mahler's words to illustrate this point while discussing that moment of recapitulation (see *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 88). Theodor Adorno also recognizes the sonata structure, but says that "the sonata pattern is really no more than a husk over the intrinsic, unfettered course of the form" (Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], p. 77). Bekker's comments about the "entire row of thematic structures . . . whose free sequence Mahler perhaps perceived as an 'introduction'" are more perceptive. Adorno would say that "the smoothing, harmonizing process of mediation is disdained; Mahler offers up chunks, not broth. Even within the introduction an 'empty' connecting space is audaciously created beyond the musical movement" (*Mahler*, p. 78). The ideas also have an echo in one of the most original and fascinating structural analyses of the movement, that of David B. Greene, who sees the several gestures of the introduction and the near or complete stops between them as future-directed music that collapses and suddenly lacks a future. The two large march sections overcome this by becoming ever more gradually and irrevocably future-directed, ultimately unifying the movement by incorporating the gestures of the introduction, overcoming the many disruptive gaps in the flow by establishing a hard-earned temporal process. See Greene, *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), pp. 139-66. Steven Johnson's dissertation explores the conflict between the tonal centers of D and F, contrasting the D-minor introduction themes with the F-major march of the main section. The D/F dichotomy is shown to govern not only the first movement, but the entire symphony. Johnson also places the tonal dualism in the context of dualisms expressed by Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Nietzsche. See "Thematic and Tonal Processes in Mahler's Third Symphony" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1989).
- 16 The triplet indication is missing in m. 103 (m. 5 of example).
- 17 Ludwig Schiedermair contributed the commentary on the Third to *Meisterführer*, No. 10 ("Mahlers Symphonien"), published by Schlesinger (Berlin) in 1910. In his brief analysis, he merely states that the horns

energetically enter with the theme, followed by a musical example with the first six measures, not three (p. 66). Otto Ernst Nodnagel released a longer analysis of the Third in 1904 (Darmstadt: Eduard Roether). Bekker includes both in his bibliography. According to Franklin, Nodnagel rebuked Schiedermaier for “mistakes” and programmaticism in his program notes for the Krefeld premiere of the Third (although Mahler himself had given Schiedermaier certain instructions regarding the program), and Nodnagel’s own elaborate and non-programmatic analysis from 1904 was angrily dismissed by Mahler (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 108, n. 24).

- 18 In the autograph, this passage is headed “Pan Schläft” (“Pan Sleeps”). Franklin describes it as the “second subject” of the introduction (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 84).
- 19 This signal is marked “Der Herold!” (“The Herald!”) in the autograph.
- 20 Thus, despite his earlier assertions about the lack of a sharp borderline, Bekker places the beginning of the main movement/exposition in the same place as virtually every other later analyst. Franklin devotes several pages to establishing the similarity of this version of the awakening call to, and possible inspiration from, the student song “Wir hatten gebauet ein staatliches Haus” with text by August Binzer. This song is also familiar from Brahms’s *Academic Festival Overture*. In that context, the similarity to the opening gesture of the main theme from the Finale of the Brahms First Symphony is also interesting. Again, Franklin credits William J. McGrath with this observation, and it is placed in a sociopolitical context. See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 81-84.
- 21 But Adorno is correct when he says that this collapse is “without any sense of catastrophe, rather as if a new aspect were suddenly revealed.” He also says that the ensuing “immoderate” and “excessively enlarged” development section balances the unusually large introduction, discussing the elements of this development section in some detail (*Adorno*, p. 78-80). Bekker will discuss the thematic connection of this climactic collapse to the Finale in the context of that movement.
- 22 The original example mistakenly has five flats instead of six in the key signature. The C in the third measure of the example (m. 494) is correctly flat. The key signature has been corrected here.
- 23 This marks the opening of the huge developmental march. The first passage is marked “Das Gesindel!” (“The Rabble!”) in the autograph.
- 24 This material is marked “Die Schlacht beginnt!” (“The Battle Begins!”) and then “Der Süd Sturm!” (“The South Storm!”) in the autograph.
- 25 Bekker’s terse treatment of this moment of recapitulation is surprising, as it has been a major point for later analysts. He does not mention the collapse of the preceding developmental march and the entry of the offstage side drums in their own tempo. According to Franklin, this is “the most unexpected recapitulation there ever was” (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 88). Adorno says that “the transition to the recapitulation by side drums alone appears absurd. But in the face of the genius of this passage such objections reel helplessly . . . The development is swept aside, as if the composing subject were tired of intervening in his music and left it to come unmolested to self-awareness” (*Mahler*, p. 78). It is one of the major sectional “breaks” in Greene’s analysis (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 145, 158). In a discussion of Mahler’s tendency to recapitulate introductory material (seen also in the first movement and Finale of the First and the Finale of the Sixth), Mitchell particularly refers to this recapitulation when he says that he “finds it hard . . . to take the return of the slow introduction . . . in the midst of a movement that, by this stage, has accumulated a great deal of drive and energy. To be hauled back to the very slow tempo of the introduction, and to music *out* of which the great

marching-on march has emerged, is in some sense an exasperating experience, but one that is attributable not to arbitrariness on Mahler's part but to a consistency of practice in which, for good or ill, he persisted well-nigh throughout his creative life" (*The Wunderhorn Years*, p. 207).

- 26 Franklin connects the previously "sentimental" trombone solo to Schiller's ideas of "naïve" and "sentimental" poetry (see note 5, p. 84 in the first "Symphonic Style" chapter). He also links the closing "vocal" turn in the cellos to a similar oboe phrase in the "Urlicht" from the Second Symphony. See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 89.
- 27 These observations of Bekker are particularly noted by Franklin (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 53).
- 28 When the movement was first performed in Berlin on November 9, 1896, Mahler provided a program note that included five musical examples from the movement, along with the complete program and movement titles for the whole symphony. This "thematic index" is the only program note by Mahler himself that contains music quotations. It supports Bekker's idea that the Third is Mahler's only symphony whose program was conceived from the beginning and followed through in the composition process and in early performances. Mahler's program notes for the First, for example, do not include actual quotations of music. See Franklin, *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 24-25 and Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 318-20.
- 29 This is another famous letter that is frequently quoted. In *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, it is Letter 195 (pp. 179-80).
- 30 The "unknown party" in question is Natalie Bauer-Lechner, who anonymously released a series of conversations as "Aus einem Tagebuch über Gustav Mahler," pp. 184-88 in the commemorative Mahler issue of *Der Merker* from March 1, 1912 (3/5), which is given in Bekker's bibliography and more extensively discussed at the beginning of the chapter on the Fourth Symphony (see p. 389, note 2). This quotation appears on p. 187. In the later publication under Bauer-Lechner's own name (*Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler*, ed. Johann Killian [Leipzig: E. P. Tal, 1923]), the passage quoted here appears on pp. 33-34, slightly altered from the version in *Der Merker* that Bekker knew.
- 31 Bekker does not use the Italian term here, but rather "mit dem Holz geschlagen." English usage would favor the Italian term *col legno*.
- 32 There is an apparent misprint here, with the remainder of the word "nehmen" being left out after a hyphen.
- 33 While Bekker makes note of the thematic connections between "Das himmlische Leben" and "Es sungen drei Engel" (the fifth movement) in the analysis of the former as the last movement of the Fourth Symphony, he does not discuss the quotations from the song, once planned as the Finale of *this* symphony, in this $\frac{9}{8}$ section of the "flower" minuet. These quotations and references are examined in some detail by Franklin (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 55, 58-59) and Mitchell (*The Wunderhorn Years*, p. 312). Mitchell also finds a quotation of the song's main melody, first presented by the clarinet, in the "Herald" passage of the *first* movement.
- 34 The passages in this movement where the main material returns are examined by Mitchell as a type of "telescoping," where the reprise begins while the lead-up to that reprise is still in motion, or where the recapitulation begins on the "wrong side" of the double bar. The most famous example of this technique is the recapitulation of the first movement of the Fourth Symphony. For a discussion of its use in this "flower" minuet and elsewhere, see *The Wunderhorn Years*, pp. 320-24.
- 35 Bekker's use of "piano transcription" ("Klavierübertragung") here is curious, as Mahler never orchestrated this song. He seems to be contrasting the piano accompaniment to the orchestration of the symphonic movement, but

this “transcription” would be in the opposite direction.

- 36 Translations of the texts in examples from the song are not redundantly given in these captions, as Bekker provides the entire text above.
- 37 Adorno said of the movement that it “comports itself like animals: as if its empathy with their closed world were meant to mitigate something of the curse of closedness” (*Mahler*, p. 8).
- 38 The melody is actually played by a piccolo.
- 39 Curiously, Bekker notes that this is the regular flute (“große Flöte”) without indicating before that the initial melody was played by a piccolo.
- 40 One of these “mysterious” passages, mm. 192-196, is identified by Franklin as a quotation of Mahler’s song “Das irdische Leben” (*Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 62).
- 41 The post horn melody is, of course, another excellent example of the “naïveté” in Schiller’s sense that Bekker so frequently seems to admire. Adorno’s comments on the post horn episodes are memorable. He says that the postilion’s horn “has a human timbre against the attenuated muted strings, the residue of creaturely bondage to which the alien voice would do no harm” and that “through animals humanity becomes aware of itself as impeded nature and of its activity as deluded natural history” (*Mahler*, pp. 8-9). Later on, he says in a non-pejorative way that the post horn solo is “scandalously audacious” (p. 36). Both Floros and Franklin refer to Ernst Decsey’s account of his suggestion that the post horn should be interpreted by referring to Lenau’s poem *Der Postillon* and that Mahler, amazed, said that this was exactly what he had in mind. In the autograph, Mahler wrote “Der Postillon!” at the beginning of this first episode. See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 63-64 and *The Symphonies*, p. 102. Jason Starr’s excellent film about the Third Symphony includes many of these ideas about the post horn solo. Franklin, Mitchell, and Solvik all appear in the segment. See Jason Starr (producer and director), *What the Universe Tells Me: Unraveling the Mysteries of Mahler’s Third Symphony* (Arts Video Productions, Ltd., 2003; distributed by Video Artists International, Pleasantville, NY).
- 42 Adorno called this climax a “Panic epiphany” (*Mahler*, p. 9).
- 43 In Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen*, p. 41 and “Aus einem Tagebuch über Gustav Mahler,” p. 188.
- 44 As with the song above, the translation for the text in the examples for this movement is not given because Bekker previously provides the entire text.
- 45 These oboe calls are labeled “Der Vogel der Nacht!” (“The Bird of Night!”) in the autograph score.
- 46 A “curious” observation in connection to Bekker’s point here is that in many performances of the Third today, girls’ voices are also included.
- 47 In this movement, as in portions of the chapters on the Second, Fourth, and Eighth Symphonies, Bekker provides the entire text, but splits it between the examples and the main body. When the text is not given in the main body, it is provided with translation in the example captions.
- 48 “Bete” is correct and always sung. Bekker’s “bitte” is a mistake or misprint.
- 49 Many have since noted the strong resemblance of this theme to the opening of the D-flat-major slow movement

in Beethoven's last string quartet, Op. 135. Freeze illustrates this quotation, along with other allusions in the theme, including Act I of Wagner's *Parsifal* and the slow movement of Hans Rott's Symphony in E major. See Freeze, Ph.D. diss., pp. 237-39, 345. Franklin had previously indicated the Rott quotation and had also shown (as would Freeze) that the slow movement of Rott's symphony is a source for the climactic trumpet descent in thirds borrowed from the first movement (here seen in the example labeled 3-88). See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, pp. 74-75. Rott was a student friend and roommate of Mahler who committed suicide in 1884 at age 25. Mahler greatly admired him and his music.

- 50 Franklin refers to this statement of Bekker at the beginning of his discussion of the movement, and then notes that the opening gesture is a rising perfect fourth with an upbeat, just as at the beginning of the whole symphony. See *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*, p. 73.
- 51 Freeze notes a possible Brahms quotation in this theme, the song "Feldeinsamkeit," Op. 86, No. 2. (Ph.D. diss., pp. 237-38, 345).
- 52 Most analytical descriptions of this movement divide it into four parts, or "waves." In the first three, the presentation of the main major-key theme is followed by a more agitated minor-key passage. These minor-key passages all culminate in an anguished collapse, each more shattering than the last. They all quote from the first and fourth movements. The first collapse, as Bekker notes here, quotes from the "contradictory" material of the first movement in the horns. The second incorporates the "Tief ist ihr Weh!" motive from both the first and fourth movements (seen in Example 3-87). The last and most powerful climax then includes the descending trumpet thirds from the two climactic passages of the marches in the first movement (seen in Example 3-88). The presentations of the main theme overcome these collapses by gradually incorporating woodwinds, then brass into the theme that was initially played by strings only. Thus, they appropriate the woodwind and brass colors that were heard from the outset in the minor-key passages, and this enables the main theme to conquer the increasingly intense outbursts (Floros calls them "painful interludes"). The culminating fourth and final section only includes the grand, triumphant final statement of the main theme. See Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. pp. 106-7 and Greene, *Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 167-68 and ff.

[137]

FOURTH SYMPHONY

[138 blank]

[139] **In** the Mildenburg letter of July 1, 1896, Mahler speaks of the final movement from the Third Symphony as “No. 7.”¹ The number seven also turns up in one of the conversations shared in *Der Merker*,² with the addition of the programmatic headings, and there under number 6 is the label “Was mir die Liebe erzählt” (“What Love Tells Me”), and number 7 “Was mir das Kind erzählt” (“What the Child Tells Me”). “And I will name the whole thing ‘My Happy Science’—and that is what it is, too,” Mahler adds.³

According to this, the Third Symphony was originally supposed to contain seven movements, and the seventh was later dropped. Whether this seventh movement, as appears from the statement that was orally passed down, was to be the closing movement or whether, as the Mildenburg letter suggests, the Adagio “Was mir die Liebe erzählt” was always planned as the Finale and the former seventh movement would have taken its place before it, cannot be completely determined by the currently available statements.⁴ Only the original number of seven is certain. In addition, it is certain that the seventh movement by no means failed to be carried out or indeed became lost; it became, rather, the seed of the Fourth Symphony. The piece “Was mir das Kind erzählt” is now the Finale of the Fourth Symphony, the *Wunderhorn* song of “heavenly joys.” The displacement, that is the elimination from the Third Symphony, must have taken place somewhat late, at a time when the composition of the piece had already been completed, for there exist between the present fifth movement, the angel chorus, and the soprano song of the “heavenly joys” melodic, harmonic, and motivic correspondences that point to a very close original connection.

The course of events was likely such that Mahler, beset by an overabundance of visions while drafting the Third Symphony, steered toward two finales: a dramatic one that provided a

crowning conclusion to the great sweeping ideas of the symphony, and an idyllic one that corresponded to the gentle line of the middle movements—one that signified a deeply expansive summary of the intensity of feeling that underlay the entire work, and one that resolved all problems by means of a playful dream. Placing these two pieces next to each other, or one directly after the other, would have endangered the effect of a work with an already extensive scope, and in addition would have disturbed the organic unity. Still more than these reasons, Mahler's realization that the line leading to the conclusion with the idyllic finale had not yet been internally and clearly enough prepared may have had a say in the matter. This resolution into the playful fairy tale, this gentle unraveling without violence, without tragedy, without external force, but only through ever more delicately layered deconstruction, through a careful removal of the veil, meant the achievement of a developmental stage that already lay above and beyond the Third Symphony. It was necessary to consolidate and establish this new recognition in a backward manner, as it were, from the newly obtained endpoint, to create for it a realm of its own that would become its source of life and upon whose appearances it could represent itself and prove its own fertility. As deeply as it was connected to the Third Symphony's circle of ideas, as much as it needed them in order to be able to become itself, it nevertheless signified [140] in its completion a higher, more mature world view, the entry into a purer and brighter sphere of thought and imagination, from which a new, transfigured kind of symphonic formation would also necessarily emerge again.⁵

That Mahler could reach this stage, that he could reach further than the tragic experience of the First Symphony, further than the question about the last things in the Second, further than the symbolism of the natural experience in the Third, to a world view that grows not from an

uncontrollable Faustian thirst for knowledge, but rather from a cheerfully painless view of what has been given, from the smiling peace of the wise one who returns back to childhood dreams—that was the experience of the human as well as the artistic development of his personality. In the life of every great artist there is a resting point, a moment in which the storms of youth have abated, in which problems that have concerned him to that point are brought to a certain conclusion, a moment in which the personality reaches a pure consciousness of itself, its strength, and its innermost essence, and looks with passive superiority, as it were, upon the game of life. Pain, that great stimulant, is silent. The need for immediate action expires. What continue to work are only the inner forces that, instead of steering to a particular goal, perform a secretive, cheerful dance, rejoicing in their own aimless movement. This is the middle point, the high noon of existence. The personality, released from pain and passion, soars free over things, rests in the balance of its own spiritual forces until new storms grasp it. In such a circumstance of the greatest gathered strength, the roughly forty-year-old Beethoven wrote his Eighth Symphony, this song in praise of self-liberating serenity. In such a circumstance, the also nearly forty-year-old Mahler wrote his Fourth Symphony from 1899 to 1900. It is a culminating work in every respect. In all the previous symphonies, certain tensions between artist and world were brought to a head. Out of the resolution of these tensions, a quiet energy developed that was capable of, but not thirsty for action. For the time being, it comes to a conclusion in the satisfied fullness of the Third Symphony's final Adagio. The artist has gained faith in himself and the world. In the Second Symphony, he recognized himself as the vessel of the Divine, and the Divine revealed itself to him as an enhancement of the natural elements that comprehend all beings of the visible and invisible world. After the experience of these stirring events, the peace of a serene, calm

occupation comes over him. Here, connections to real life also appear. In May 1897, Mahler had become conductor of the Vienna Court Opera, and in October of the same year followed the appointment as director. Outwardly, he had also arrived at his highest achievable goal. Happiness and other personal feelings had been heightened to their utmost level. He felt himself in possession of complete strength of will and accomplishment, and he saw the world at his feet. The desire to play with this world that he had overcome grew powerfully within him. Any tragedy disappears, and everything problematic resolves itself in serenity. Out of childhood dreams rises the image of a distant and unspeakably peaceful, carefree world. A wonderfully naïve landscape appears. People call it the “land of milk and honey” (“Schlaraffenland”).⁶ [141] Here any need becomes a source of joy, and all desire is satisfied. And yet there is no discontent and no surfeit because of this lack of pain. Really, all this is the trick of a fairy tale, consciously playing with distant desires. Eating and drinking, along with everything of a physical nature, becomes a lasting joy with smiling contentedness. Charming rounds, dances, and songs are the whole of existence. But above it all sounds an unspeakably tender and lovely music, such as has never been heard on earth.⁷ This world view, untouchable by every overcasting gloom, cheerfully soaring in the distant clouds, this “Christian Cockaigne,” as Goethe calls the song of the “heavenly joys,”⁸ becomes for Mahler the foundation for his new image of life, and now expands from a simple song into a grand, four-part symphonic structure.

In all the previous symphonies of Mahler, the Finale had been the main and central movement, the goal of the development. In the First and Second, it had expanded to an enormous scale, swelling in the First beyond the architectonic dimensions of the typical instrumental finale, and, in the Second, availing itself of the additional sonorities provided by

solo and choral singing. Both times, the significance of the closing movement was also externally emphasized through the amassing of resources. This relationship changes in the Third Symphony. Here, the final Adagio is indeed the weightiest among the movements of the second part, but is surpassed in scope and outward extravagance by the opening movement.

Nevertheless, it also retains the central meaning here. All threads come together within it. The predominance of the first movement is basically of a purely material kind, for the intensity and force of expression in the Finale, as well as its concentrated power, supersede every advantage that the first movement may have in external weight. Mahler himself characterized this relationship of the two outer movements in conversation when he spoke of the thematic connections between the two, which however, as he believed, would hardly be noticed by the listeners. “That which was dull, still lifeless and immobile there, here is unfolded to the highest consciousness, and the unarticulated sounds have reached the highest articulation.”⁹ According to this, there is also no doubt here about the superior significance of the Finale, for the objective that is provided by this Finale determines the construction of the entire symphony as well as the layout and execution of the individual movements.

With the Fourth Symphony, a change occurs, insofar as the Finale is the least demanding and shortest movement and bears the least symphonic character: a simple song for solo soprano with the accompaniment of a small orchestra. The singing voice retains the leadership almost throughout, and the few interludes cannot be considered as independent instrumental statements. The song character is strictly maintained. Viewed in such a way, this closing movement appears only as a lightweight pendant. And yet it is the main movement of the whole in exactly the same sense as the finales of the three previous symphonies, the destination that determines the style

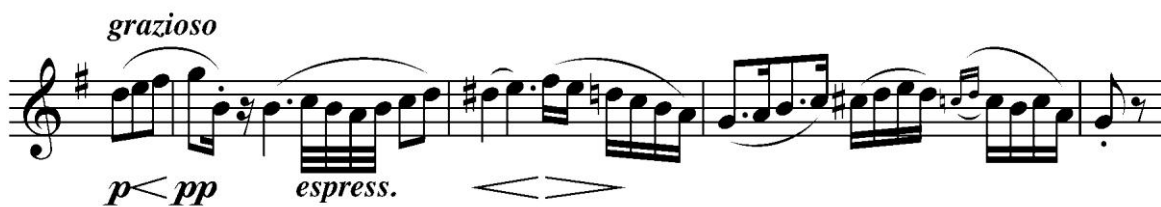
and summarizes all of the forces that are at work in the preceding movements. Only the outer image has shifted, and it feigns an altered relationship in the organization of movements. In reality, the determining force of the Finale in the Fourth even reaches considerably further than in the previous symphonies. In these, it perhaps remained a constant goal, but it initially hovered at an undetermined distance and needed first [142] to be gradually brought to a clear embodiment by means of the preceding movements. In the Fourth, the Finale stands firm from the beginning, and out of it spring the preceding movements in a gradual backward development. The Finale is thus the heart of the work in the fullest sense here. It not only contains important thematic seeds for the movements that come before it. It already encloses within itself the entire spiritual layout of the work. In a far greater measure than the closing movements of the earlier works, it determines the style and character of the whole, for both must be taken from this, the structure that had been complete from the outset. As strange as it may sound, this song, alongside the “Urlicht” and the “drunken song”¹⁰ the briefest of all symphonic movements of Mahler to this point, this song that seems to constitute only a postlude to the preceding larger instrumental pieces—this song is the actual symphony. Everything that comes before it is nothing but a fantastic prelude to the externally unpretentious, non-symphonic main movement. One could also say that the song, in few measures and with the utmost clarity, provides the essential material of the movements that precede it. Of course, this clarity presupposes the preparatory work of the instrumental pieces. Therefore, these are also necessary as a massive foundation for the delicate housetop of the finale, just as conversely, this housetop provides the three-step foundation with a meaning that is clarified and justified.¹¹

From the predominance of the Song-Finale emerges a striking simplification in the layout of the complete plan. To this point, a powerful need for expansion had been characteristic of Mahler's symphonic construction. At first, this was with respect to the conceptual formal structure and then also with respect to the number of movements. The First Symphony was indeed still constructed in four movements, but it already contained the larger-than-life finale whose sections, forcefully forged to one another, almost threatened to break apart under the overabundance of material. In the Second, the number of movements had increased to five, and in the Third to six, in the first draft even to seven. At the same time, Mahler had, with the organization into "parts," established a formal architectonic principle that appeared to give room to further bold combinations. The drive toward great length works inexorably and creates for itself readily new, comprehensive rules of order. Suddenly it breaks off and turns back the opposite way. The number of movements shrinks back again to four. The Song-Finale is not burdened with any greater weight. The material that it carries within itself is exhausted in four movements, of which the last only provides the brief, summarizing resumé and overview.

Not only the architectonic, but also the acoustic scale suddenly diminishes. The woodwind group is reduced: all fourth parts fall away with the exception of the fourth flute, which is frequently used to play piccolo. Instead of eight horns, only four are required, instead of four trumpets three, while trombones and tuba are not used. The percussion, however, is again full. Mahler cannot do without its rhythmic force and elemental color. Only the tambourine, snare drum, and rute¹² are absent. He demands timpani, bass drum, triangle, glockenspiel, cymbals, tam-tam, and the new addition of sleigh bells, a kind of sound evoking a carriage or stagecoach, a new and unusual color with a fantastic charm. Despite this impressive number of

percussion instruments, the stylistic character of the work is maintained. Massive effects and violent buildups are avoided throughout, [143] for the percussion instruments are also primarily used in a soloistic manner for certain individual effects. The orchestral sound thus obtains, through the absence of all thick, massive tones, particularly the heavy brass, something unusually shimmering, transparent, almost like a pastel. The peculiarity of this transparency in sound, which to this point in Mahler was only undertaken episodically in individual movements, but never yet throughout a completed work, is heightened by the treatment of the strings. Seldom did Mahler so persistently favor certain effects of slurring and connecting, such as *glissandi*, *portamenti*, and drawn-out fermatas, such delicate and tender fashions of execution that occasionally aim for a sweet and sensual yearning, and expressly call for them through prescriptions of bowing and fingering, as he did here.¹³ The Austrian character and the instinct of the musician elementally break forth. All that is enticing, ingratiating, and directly endearing in the personal artistry of the player is consciously placed in the service of stylistic expression. Connected to this is the consistently violin-oriented thematic and melodic character. In the three preceding works, the heavy utilization of the winds had also significantly influenced the themes. The linear pattern of the themes was kept such that they either created no difficulties when the wind groups took them over, or that they grew out of the character of the wind instruments from the outset and could be played about, ornamented, and figuratively embellished by the strings. Hence, the fanfare-like aspect of the themes, especially in Mahler's outer movements. They are consistently devised with the idea of being rendered by the non-agile wind group, and their main lines must be able to be made forceful through the brass. With the Fourth Symphony, the picture is changed. Through the elimination of a heavy part of the winds, the dynamic of the work

obtains a delicate, flexible tension from the outset. The severe, elevated pathos is no longer the climactic goal. The woodwinds, which are constantly made to adapt to either the more physically powerful brass or the more intensively melodic string group, strive more toward soloistic special effects than toward choral harmony. The violin sound determines the thematic line. There are therefore now themes of an essentially different layout than Mahler has previously used, and melodies that have emerged purely out of the intention to make the string instruments sing. There thus arise sensitively and delicately bowed, richly intricate, occasionally ornate formations full of old-fashioned grace and flowing mobility, such as the main theme of the first movement:



[Example 4-1: first violins, first movement, mm. 3-7]

Then again there are melodies that are completely created from the soulful *vibrato* of the long-drawn, gently oscillating, strongly emotional string tone, such as the variation theme of the slow movement:¹⁴



[Example 4-2: top voice of cellos, third movement, mm. 1-9]

Then again such melodies for which the presentation of the sweeping *gilssando* and of the inwardly connected but also broadly expansive singing line is decisive, such as the second theme of the opening movement: [144]



[Example 4-3: cellos, first movement, mm. 37-41]

These stylistic features can be traced individually. They confirm that here, a special kind of orchestral grouping strongly influenced the thematic formation. For the first time in Mahler, the string section again constitutes the foundation of the tonal impression. The winds, as in the older symphonic art, are primarily used for coloristic and individual soloistic effects, and are considered less as a discreet unit and in no way as the dynamic goal of the sonic structure. The vocal kind of expression prevails, and the more dramatic one disappears as a force that determines the style.

The diminutive aspects of this new symphonic organism, necessitated by the Song-Finale, are also apparent, not only in the total external plan and in the orchestral construction, but also in the scope and structure of the individual movements. Here as well there is a complete halt of the previous urge to expansion. The most extensive movement of the Fourth, its first, numbers only a bit over a third of the measure count of the first movement of the Third Symphony; the Scherzo and slow movement are indeed broadly and calmly spun out, but never exceed the usual precedent in dimension. Thus, in all features relating to the plan and general character of this work is shown the determining influence of the final song. It is likewise shown in the particular

execution of the movements, in their thematic and poetic types. It is shown in the entire intent of the form that is expressed in the appearance of this work.

It is immediately noteworthy that all three preceding movements are thematically linked to the Finale. This linkage is most conspicuous between the first and fourth movements. This is not some hidden motivic relationship, but rather a thematic and particularly a sonic one, brought about by the introductory measures, which are very memorable because of the ringing sleigh bells. They return again multiple times in the Finale as an orchestral interlude, and are motivically continued in the song accompaniment. Also distinctly highlighted are the connections between the Adagio and the Finale. They are found at the sudden concluding turn of the Adagio from G major to E major. Here there are both thematic anticipations of Finale motives as well as reminiscences of the opening movement, and thus three movements are tied together. Comparatively, the Scherzo makes the least reference to the other movements. It only shows hidden paraphrases of Finale motives, certainly not unintentional, yet, despite the prescription “distinctly” (“deutlich”), not as strongly meaningful to the consciousness of the listener as the echoes named above.

In light of these thematic relationships, closely spun into each other and emphasized with unmistakeable intention in the closing movement, the idea is natural that here, similar to the Third Symphony, the presence of an underlying programmatic idea can be assumed. Such an idea really was present.

There exists as a counterpart to the two program sketches to the Third Symphony a previously unknown page with the following contents: [145]

Sinfonie Nr. 4 (Humoreske).

- Nr. 1. Die Welt als ewige Jetztzeit, G-dur.
- Nr. 2. Das irdische Leben, es-moll.
- Nr. 3. Caritas H-dur (Adagio).
- Nr. 4. Morgenglocken, F-dur.
- Nr. 5. Die Welt ohne Schwere, D-Dur (Scherzo).
- Nr. 5. Das himmlische Leben, G-dur.

Symphony No. 4 (Humoresque).

- No. 1. The World as Eternal Now, G major.
- No. 2. The Earthly life, E-flat minor.
- No. 3. Caritas, B major (Adagio).
- No. 4. Morning Bells, F major.
- No. 5. The World Without Gravity, D major (Scherzo).
- No. 5. The Heavenly Life, G major.¹⁵

This page is important in many respects. First of all, it shows that the plan for the Fourth Symphony arose almost simultaneously with that for the Third. The sketch page must have its origins in the time in which the Third was also in the making, for the movement mentioned as No. 4, “Morning Bells,” is the angel chorus from the Third. According to this, Mahler had originally viewed it for the Fourth just as, on the other hand, the present Finale of the Fourth was considered for the Third. One sees that the Third and Fourth Symphonies are a pair of twins, as

the designs for both are mixed with each other. In their gradual selection and ordering, however, is reflected an enlightening developmental process that was internalized in Mahler.

The sketch page for the Fourth reveals still more. Besides the “Morning Bells,” it refers to three movements whose execution did not later come to pass. First of all, “Das irdische Leben, E-flat minor.” This is one of Mahler’s darkest, most painful *Wunderhorn* compositions, the song “Mutter, ach Mutter, es hungert mich” (“Mother, o Mother, I am hungry”). According to the sketch, Mahler had considered a symphonic use of this piece and later abandoned it, perhaps because the terribly demonic song appeared to him as far too sharp a contrast within the “Humoresque.” The present dance-of-death Scherzo, with its fantastic mixture of harsh and gentle colors, fits better within the total character of the symphony.

Also curious is the designation “Caritas” for the B-major Adagio that was planned as the third movement. Just like “Das irdische Leben,” it did not come about. But Mahler retained the concept, for in the first sketch of the Eighth Symphony, which plans for four movements, the plan for a “Caritas” Adagio still appears. If one can establish, on the basis of the available sketches, the continuation of a musical and poetic idea from an earlier time into the last years, then it is natural to make a conjecture that the D-major Scherzo, “The World Without Gravity” (“Die Welt ohne Schwere”), really was written. Certainly not for the Fourth, but for the Fifth Symphony, where such a scherzo—without a heading—forms the second part. The Scherzo of the Fifth would accordingly be the oldest part of this symphony and would still have roots in the mood and realm of the Third and Fourth. Although this conjecture cannot be proved, it appears conceivable on the basis of the programmatic sketch.¹⁶

This page thus not only allows a look at the genesis of the Third and Fourth Symphonies, but also provides some indications of Mahler's symphonic plans and his manner of poetic sketching in general. For the Fourth Symphony as it exists today, besides the complete description "Humoresque," only two of the six headings have retained their validity: the first, "The World as Eternal Now" ("Die Welt als ewige Jetztzeit") and the last, "The Heavenly Life" ("Das himmlische Leben"). A basic poetic and programmatic idea is therefore present: this world and the next world, understood as a humorous, idyllic contrast, provide the beginning and ending points. The middle [146] portions are changed in relation to the first draft. The second movement obtains the designation "Freund Hein [Death] Starts to Play" ("Freund Hein spielt auf"). In the score, this heading is absent.¹⁷ At any rate, the use of a solo violin tuned one step higher than usual with the performance indication "very driven, like a fiddle" ("sehr zufahrend, wie eine Fidel") is striking enough and calls up the image provided by Mahler, even without a special indication. It would probably also be possible to sketch a programmatic idea with respect to the slow movement by using the hints in the closing poem and the thematic relationships to the Finale. One could then describe the symphony as a dreamlike journey to the blissful fields of heaven, a journey that commences in the first movement with merry sleigh bells, leading through alternating cheerful and gloomy landscapes of the earthly "World as Eternal Now" to Freund Hein.¹⁸ He is interpreted here in the legendary friendly sense as the enticing leader with his fiddle, who, while making music, directs his flock from this world to the next. In the quietly opening, gradually building and animated Adagio variations, a new world expands ever more broadly and clearly before the new arrivals, who ascend, as it were, through a series of

metamorphoses until that last abode is reached where every wish is fulfilled and the spirits dance and sing in blessed play.

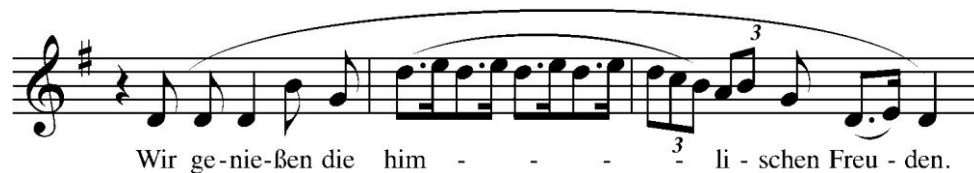
One can give this symphony such a programmatic reading without having to accept the criticism of arbitrary interpretation because of it. The thematic links between the movements as well as the text of the closing song suggest an imagined summation of the whole. Mahler's own sketches suggest that he himself may have envisioned a similar train of thought in the beginning. To be sure, Mahler later decided otherwise, hardly out of the fear of programmatic interpretations, but because such headings that were appropriate in the Third Symphony no longer appeared adequate to him here. He had apparently—as is also shown by the progress between the execution of the Third and Fourth Symphonies—inwardly outgrown the kind of poetic and programmatic symphonic composition that had found its strongest expression in the Third. The danger of possibly getting even deeper into programmatic music making—a danger that had doubtlessly been present in individual moments of the Third, especially in the overall philosophical plan—this danger had been overcome by him during his work, by virtue of his nature that reached again and again for the representation of emotion. It had become clear to him that it did not matter for him to make certain ideas intellectually comprehensible through sound symbolism used in common practice. He recognized his special mission to shape new values of sound symbolism, and through their intensity of feeling to uncover new paths of spiritual communication, new possibilities of spiritual recognition. Mahler knew that the creative power of the artist manifests itself in the capability to create his own symbolic values within his particular area of expression, and to work fruitfully through this special stylistic principle of symbolic formation. “All understanding between the composer and the listener rests upon one

convention: that the latter accepts this or that motive or musical symbol, or however one [147] may otherwise call it, as the expression for this or that idea or actual spiritual content. This is especially present in Wagner for everybody, but Beethoven and more or less every other composer also have their particular expression, which is accepted by the world, for everything that they want to say. The people have still not responded to my language, however. They have no idea what I say and what I mean, and it appears senseless and incomprehensible to them. Likewise almost all musicians who play my work—and each time it takes a considerable time until it dawns on them. When recently in Berlin, at the first rehearsal of the first movement of the D-major symphony—which at first they did not understand at all and did not manage, and where I myself thought to stand before insurmountable difficulties—this suddenly became clear to me, the moment was like being shot dead. Why, I cried within myself, must I suffer all of this? Why must I take this terrible martyrdom upon myself? And not only for me, but for all that were nailed to this cross before me because they wanted to present their best work to the world, and for all who are still to come after me, I felt the most immeasurable pain.”¹⁹

Mahler spoke these words with respect to the D-major symphony. They can be applied just as well to the Fourth in G major. Exactly that symbolic aspect of Mahlerian creation is again expressed here with a particular focus, as Mahler says: “All understanding between the composer and the listener rests thereon, that the latter accepts this or that motive or musical symbol . . . as the expression for this or that idea or actual spiritual content.” For this it is certainly necessary to first recognize the musical symbol as such. That is not always possible at first sight. The fundamental symbol of a work does not always step forward right at the beginning, like the fourth motive in the First and the sequence A major–A minor in the Sixth Symphony. It does not

always have the secondary meaning of a leitmotif in the Wagnerian sense. The manner in which the composer employs it is completely the prey of his own discretion, his own fantasy, and his own creative gift. The less mechanically he proceeds with it, the more fertile proves the power of symbolic communication in each case. The symbol sometimes lies deeply concealed, and works upon the listener at first only as an imperceptible, secret stimulant to a mood, such as the sequence of notes A–G–E, incessantly sounding and yet hardly ascertainable to the consciousness, in *Das Lied von der Erde*. Or the fundamental musical symbol is only suggested when first heard, and the development of the work lies precisely in the slowly progressing revelation of the main symbolic idea in sound, and only reaching full clarity in the last part.

This is the case with the Fourth Symphony. It was created from the conception of the final song, to which the preceding movements were later added in a retrograde development. The formal, logical meaning of these preceding movements that arose later is a preparation and gradual clarification of the fundamental musical idea in the finale. At first only timidly, then gradually more strongly implied, it appears vividly at the moment of the Finale's beginning, and undergoes, up until the fading away of the closing movement, the last, inwardly exhaustive intensification. This fundamental musical idea of the symphony, which the listener must here accept as the “expression for this or that idea or actual spiritual content,” [148] is the beginning of the Song-Finale. It is intoned in the instrumental prelude of the closing movement by the clarinet and then taken up by the voice:



[Example 4-4: voice, fourth movement, mm. 12-14]

One could say that in these three measures the symphony, its musical and thereby also its poetic course of ideas and development, is decided. In order to make this melody and these words possible in the pure, unadorned, undeniable clarity and simplicity of their appearance in the Finale, in order to place them before the listener with absolute persuasiveness and creative certainty, this symphonic foundation was required. These notes and these words are the pure essence of the work—but had they been brought earlier, without the far-reaching preparations, perhaps only after a brief introduction, they would have appeared trivial, or at the very least they would not have radiated the revelatory power that now emerges from them, where they, after a long, building tension, suddenly bring the tones and words of resolution. The organic construction of the work is formed out of the search for this principal liberating symbol. Out of each of the different spheres that it traverses, it always steers, consciously or unconsciously, toward the one final point. Already the first movement attempts the venture, but only reaches two briefly suggestive formulations. First the long-drawn flute call:²⁰



[Example 4-5: flutes, first movement, mm. 126-132]

Then the bass motive that is more memorably cast, but wanders into a conclusion with foreign harmony and does not find its way further:



[Example 4-6: cellos, basses, bassoons, first movement, mm. 148-150]

This bass motive is taken up by the trumpets at the climactic high point and is pointedly blown out in a forceful march style. It sounds like a sudden and impertinent victorious jubilation in fresh C major:



[Example 4-7: trumpet, first movement, mm. 211-215]

But it cannot hold on, for the upturn has no inner endurance. The strength overturns and exceeds itself, and the liberating motive that has scarcely been found crashes down again with glaring dissonance:



[Example 4-8: trumpets, first movement, mm. 221-224]

Less striking, though unmistakably aiming toward the finale, are the thematic links with the second movement. In rhythm, inflection, and character, they conform completely to the elements that appear in the Scherzo, but here they are only foreshadowing hints at that distant idea of

paradise, without any independent value or drive, shadows under shadows, quickly passing over. In radiant glory, however, the idea arises in the third movement. Here, it provides the crowning conclusion of the variation sequence with the sudden turn from G major to E major. In the four horns, “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter aufgerichtet”), resounds the ascending opening motive, “Pesante,” now shaped into a powerful fanfare:



[Example 4-9: horns, third movement, mm. 318-323 (no harmonies in m. 323)]

At the same time, trumpets and clarinets intone the supplementary theme:



[Example 4-10: trumpets (and optional clarinets), third movement, mm. 320-323]

With this turn, the breakthrough to the theme of the Finale has been achieved and the preparation concluded—the closing song [149] can begin. A metamorphosis of the idea is certainly still to come, the last, which remains reserved for the Finale itself: the definitive transfer of the melody from G major to E major. In the comparison of these two keys, the main idea is confirmed in its most tender affect: World as Eternal Now – Heavenly Life. G major—graceful and lovely, yet always remaining within a realistically perceived circle of ideas—changes into E major, for Mahler the key of otherworldly rapture and transfiguration up until the Sixth and Eighth

Symphonies.²¹ The change is prophetically indicated in the third movement. The fanfares of the main theme also sound here in E major, pointing, so to speak, beyond the opening of the Finale that directly follows, all the way to the closing image. While the E-major brilliance only briefly flares up here, however, and then quietly pales into D major, the last movement turns decisively to E major at the depiction of the heavenly music: “Kein’ Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden, die unsrer verglichen kann werden” (“There is no music on earth that can be compared to ours”). In this key, it closes with the fading *morendo* contra-E of the harp and basses, as if secretively glancing into the infinite.

One must therefore seek to view and understand the unusual work backwards, from the Finale forward. This kind of view may contradict the temporal sequence, but it reflects the internal process of its development, and it allows the roots and branches to be recognized. This is a symphony with one theme that only becomes clearly recognizable as such in the Finale, and is only suggested, never pronounced in the preceding movements. This knowledge is important not only for the comprehension of the entire course of the symphony, but also for the understanding of the individual movements. The fundamental motive is common to all, and it is also the ideal goal toward which they all steer. Because it only breaks through episodically in the opening movements, however, while other themes take up a significantly broader scope within them, these movements are thus written, as it were, upon themes that in reality are not at all as important as they would appear to be based upon their external utilization. The thematic structure is only a means to break the ground in order to invoke the desired fundamental thematic symbol upon it. The remaining themes are thereby substantially reduced in their own

significance. They are only masques that enact a comedy, a play within a play, used to draw the one truth that is sought out into the light.

From this inner attitude, from this style that is determined by the special character of the material, the peculiarities of the work that have been previously mentioned can be explained: the economical use of the orchestra, the conspicuous restraint of the expansive drive, and all of the other associated symptoms of an almost ironic self-denial. From this same attitude, the formation of the individual thematic appearances and the nature of the melodic design are also explained. The psychological process is similar to that in Beethoven's Eighth. As Beethoven in this work dispensed with the large orchestra, the powerful architecture, and the oratorical expression, as he excluded all elements of the dramatic style and reached back to dance types of an older time in the formal design, as he spoke through a mask in the whole work and only betrayed the ironic speaker in the tone of the language, as he exploited in this way the contrast between appearance and reality as the means for a humorous effect, so is also [150] Mahler's simplicity not to be interpreted as a remorseful confession of the virtues of modesty. In both cases, a conscious archaism in formal construction is present in the broadest sense. In both cases, the modern composer disguises himself in the garb of an older mode of expression. What he has to say obtains, through the outdated cut of the costume and the antiquated sort of demeanor, the refined charm of a humorous world view that hovers between dream and reality and that, with unquestionable perfection and clarity of appearance, nonetheless always retains the overtone of a completely unreal spirit of fantasy that stands beyond all plausibility.

Only coming from such a fundamental attitude of parody is a theme like that of the first movement of the symphony to be understood as a theme of Mahler:



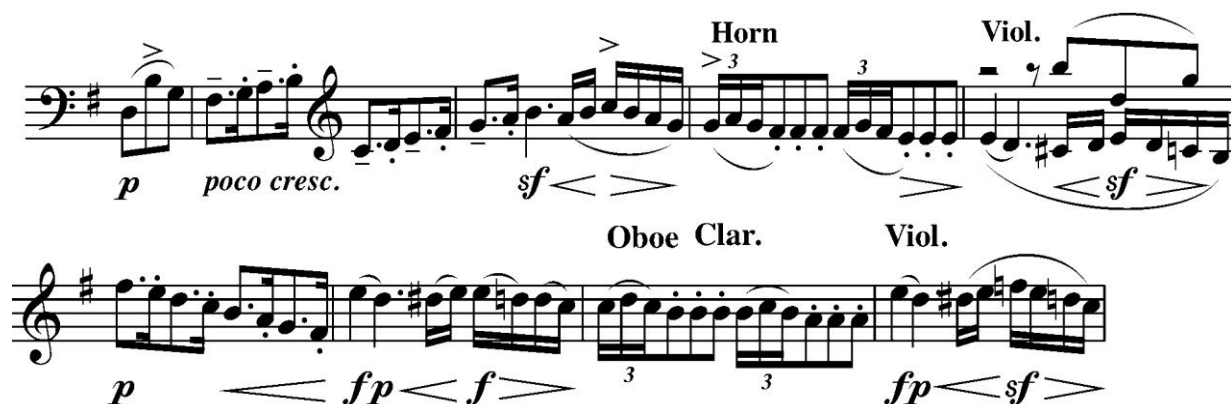
Certainly, Mahler also wrote themes with graceful, lovely melodies in the earlier symphonies. The themes of the Andante from the Second and the flower minuet from the Third Symphony are in no way inferior to the opening theme of the Fourth in pleasantness and naïveté.²² In both cases, they are intermezzo-like pieces that follow turbulent opening movements as conscious contrasts. In both cases, the basic formal scheme that was chosen was a dance type, which was given its idyllic character by the placement within the whole. Here, by contrast, this is an opening movement and the thematic kernel of this opening movement. Mahler, who to this point avoided firm periodic boundaries in the construction of his themes, instead having striven for a stretching and expansion of the melody, suddenly writes a “very leisurely” (“recht gemächlich”), delicately dancing theme in four-bar sections of a completely non-symphonic, inactive character, singing out and rounding itself off with scrupulous accuracy. Pointing with amiable innocence to the G-major secondary theme of the closing Rondo in Schubert’s D-major sonata,²³ it appears destined to serve as a pleasing, trifling motive for a small entr’acte, but not, however as the conceptual basis for a symphony. Or is it perhaps mocking this erstwhile definition of the old “theme,” whose fundamental meaning should now be carried out *ad absurdum*? Indeed, in this

symphony generally, a complete reversal of the previous conceptions of Mahlerian symphonic art appears to prevail. Instead of the mighty, far-reaching introduction in which, as in the First and Third Symphonies, a chaotic intensity rules, a monotonous three-bar *staccato* motive in the flutes is employed here:

The musical score for Example 4-12 is written for four staves. The first staff is for Flutes, the second for Clarinets, and the third and fourth for Flutes. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The first staff (Flutes) begins with a staccato motive marked 'p' and 'Bedüchtig. Nicht eilen'. The second staff (Clar.) begins with a staccato motive marked 'p' and 'simile'. The third staff (Flutes) continues the staccato motive marked 'f' and 'ff'. The fourth staff (Clar.) continues the staccato motive marked 'p' and 'dim.'. The score ends with a 'poco rit.' marking and a 'pp' dynamic.

[Example 4-12: 1st and 2nd flutes, m. 1 (continuation marked *simile*); 3rd and 4th flutes, two clarinets, mm. 2-4]

Accompanied by the ringing of sleigh bells, bird calls from the second pair of flutes are heard in the middle of it, and a downward-rolling clarinet run prepares the reception of the theme, which sashays in “grazioso, very leisurely” (“grazioso, recht gemächlich”), with a languishing *ritardando*. Only strings without basses have the word. The violins lead, as in old times, while three secondary voices provide a comfortably rocking *pizzicato* accompaniment. [151] In groups, the woodwinds initially enter as modest harmonic instruments, while the melody, in more and more abbreviated and rhythmically invigorated periods, is spun further like a dialogue, first by low strings, then by the horn, then by the first violins, and finally by the woodwinds:



[Example 4-13: violas (with cello and bass doubling), mm. 7-9; horn, mm. 10-11; first violins, mm. 11-13, 15 (with cellos and basses in m. 11, flutes in m. 15); oboe and clarinets, mm. 13-15]

Kretzschmar calls the “object” of this symphony the “educated Philistine whose nature and drive the composer presents in four pictures.”²⁴ As far as such a characterization stands from the nature of the symphony as a whole, so sharply it describes certain individual thematic events. The appeal of a theme such as this opening idea of the first movement lies in the unconcealed philistinism and short intellectual life of its appearance, in the narrow scope of its melodic line, in the complacent monotony of its rhythm, in the naïveté of its harmony. Biedermeier gracefulness in all its amiable simplicity and narrowness becomes an amusing reality, and as if this reality were not yet credible the first time, the repetition begins immediately with a banal self-confidence and undisguised delight in its own charm.²⁵ The voices now increase. To the leading first violins—Mahler, through fingering instructions, gives the upbeat an especially mellow expression:



[Example 4-14: first violins, mm. 17-18, with fingerings]²⁶

—are joined the cellos, who grope along after them. Gradually, the sleepy, sedate mood is enlivened. The basses lustily strive upward:



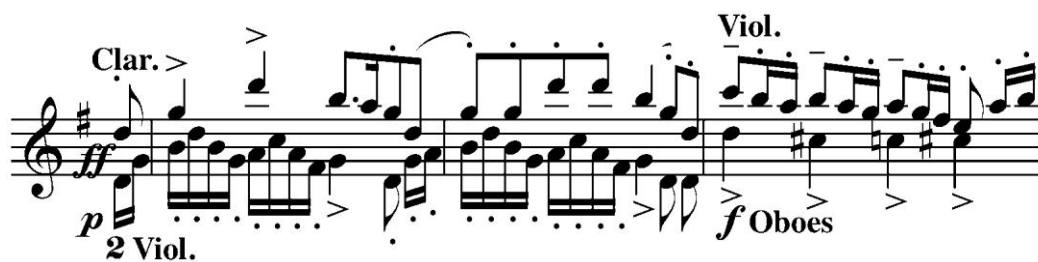
[Example 4-15: cellos and basses, mm. 21-24]

It is as if the narrow ring of the opening theme is being relaxed. The violins cling to the closing motive, which, pushing back, seeks stubbornly to assert itself in forceful harmonic evasions:



[Example 4-16: first violins, mm. 27-29]

But the opposition does not help, and a new mood breaks through. “Freshly” (“Frisch”), a cheerful marching song sounds from the clarinets. The strings accompany in folk-like rhythms, and “forcefully” (“kräftig”), the first violins lead the melody further:



[Example 4-17: clarinets and second violins (with viola and cello doubling), mm. 31-33; first violins (with second violin doubling) and oboes (with horn doubling), m. 34 (with upbeat)]

Now it swells up, “broadly sung” (“breit gesungen”), from the cellos. “Tone!” (“Ton!”), the composer specially admonishes the players:



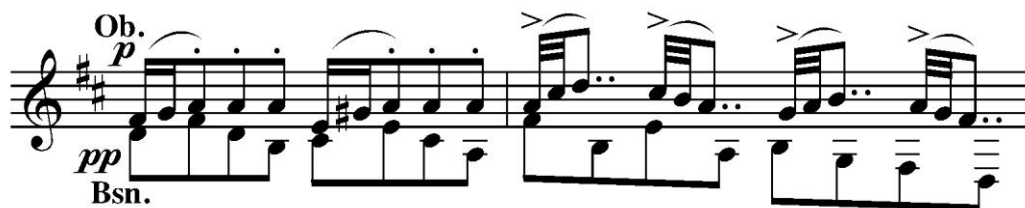
[Example 4-18: cellos, mm. 37-41]²⁷

A melody that, in contrast to the opening narrowness and self-sufficiency, presses forth into exuberance, becomes downright rapturous at the repetition, and adds a long-drawn, songful epilogue:



[Example 4-19: top voice of divided cellos, mm. 46-51; woodwinds (flutes, oboes, English horn, 1st clarinet, taking over from cellos), mm. 51-52]

Once again, as if with an irrepressible urge, the first song melody is [152] “sweepingly” (“schwungvoll”) intensified with broad lengthening of notes, lush chromatic shifts, dramatic *ritardandi*, and self-indulgent emotion. At once, the rich sound of the strings and horns breaks off, and the melody falls silent. “Suddenly slowly and deliberately” (“Plötzlich langsam und bedächtig”), an almost painfully dismissing double theme sounds: an oboe motive, turning in obstinate rhythms around the repeated note A, and with it the bassoon, accompanying in pedantically measured eighth-note *staccati*:



[Example 4-20: oboe and bassoon, mm. 58-59 (64th notes in oboe incorrectly given as 32nds)]

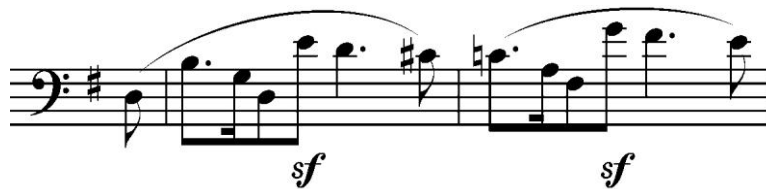
The rapturous upswing is abruptly interrupted. Quietly, the strings, then, somewhat more jauntily, the woodwinds and horns take up the opposing motives, and violins, “somewhat hurriedly” (“etwas eilend”), drive suddenly into them with a thrusting scale. But the clarinets whisper the opposing motives further among themselves; bassoons, cellos, then basses, and finally a single string bass drone on with them thereafter—until the murmuring loses itself and the ringing of the sleigh bells again escorts in the opening theme. Rapture and contradiction are gone. Biedermeier has again found its original attitude. But it retains it only briefly this time. The leisurely *Tempo primo* already changes after a few measures into “flowing” (“fließend”), and the first violins start up “cheekily” (“keck”):



[Example 4-21: first violins, cellos, basses, mm. 80-82]

This time, the theme receives a powerful shot of energy and freshness, and appears to be somewhat shaken out of the initial complacency by the preceding episode. In a “once again very

peaceful and somewhat hesitant” (“wieder sehr ruhig und etwas zurückhaltend”) epilogue, the rapturous element closes in a gently ascending:



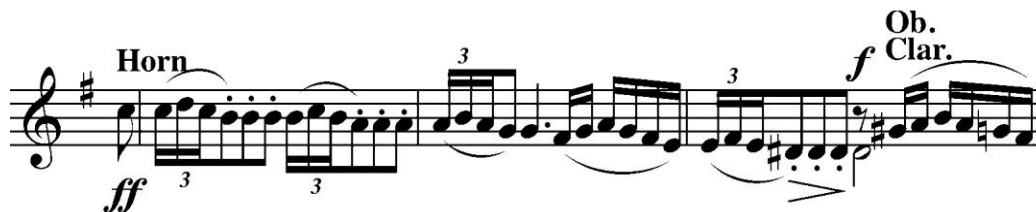
[Example 4-22: cellos, mm. 90-92]

then quietly sinking final verse:



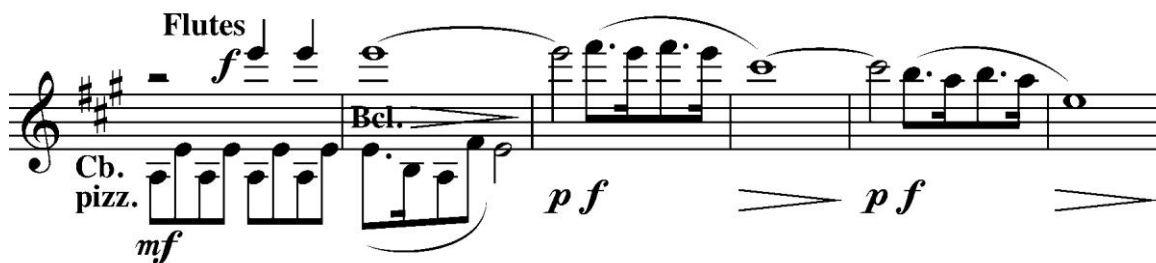
[Example 4-23: cellos, mm. 99-101]

Abruptly, the ringing sleigh bells of the introduction begin anew. One sees that the composer does not make any attempts at organic transitions. The movement sections stand next to each other episodically and are always linked by an identical interlude, as are the song verses later on in the finale. A new image arises, and the colors are transferred into the fantastic realm. With an energetic onset, the solo violin climbs up above the winds as the only string instrument, and then loses itself in an undetermined height. Motivic portions of the first theme, transposed to minor in a somewhat gruff and coarse way, seek to continue on independently. Thus, the episodic motive, intoned by the horn, with a songlike expansion:



[Example 4-24: horns 1 and 3, mm. 109-112; oboes and clarinets, m. 112]

But the continuation is unsuccessful, and the thematic opening also does not accomplish it in the course of several willful attempts. It is a restless, agitated mood. The alternation between “not hurried” (“nicht eilen”) and “a bit urgently” (“etwas drängend”) prevails, and a string run that passionately starts up, then quietly rolls into the depths, appears to dissolve the image. There is a sudden brightening: over the *pizzicato* bass A–E, quietly trilling cellos on the dominant note E, and [153] a rocking bass clarinet motive, the paradise theme appears in the flutes which, although here only a premonition, nevertheless brings light and purpose into the unclear motion:



[Example 4-25: flute, mm. 126-131; basses, m. 126; bass clarinet, m. 127]

The pedal point on A persists, and the flute call also continues to sound “always flowing, but without rushing” (“immer fließend, aber ohne Hast”). Active contrapuntal voices gradually enter, along with sixteenth-note runs in the violins, and in addition, with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter auf”), an almost shrieking wind motive, quietly supplemented by the basses:



[Example 4-26: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 144-147; cellos and basses, mm. 148-149]

The paradise theme is also here, but distorted and only indistinctly perceived. The light goes out again, and the previous aimlessness rises to a fantastic confusion and unrest. The introductory motive without sleigh bells thumps in E-flat minor, *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* motivic fragments dart and cry into each other in an eerie exchange, the woodwinds shriek brief calls with raised bells, and the paradise motive, shadow-like, moves hauntingly through the basses. In F minor, the mood appears to obtain a certain gloomy steadiness and measured calm:



[Example 4-27: flutes and oboe, mm. 167-168]²⁸

Soon, however, the confused episodic calls press again forward, and it is as if motives of the most varied origin seek to find their way on their own, like lost little souls. The Biedermeier theme from the beginning also emerges, although in a pathetic distortion:



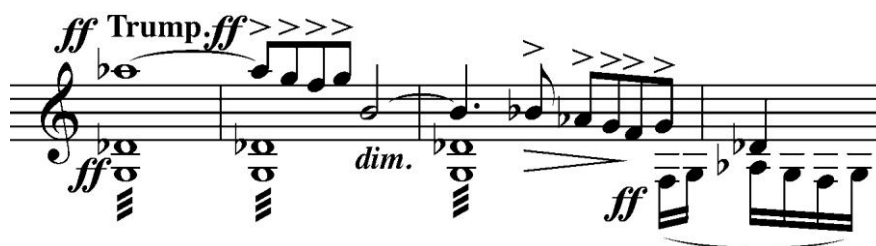
[Example 4-28: first violins, mm. 191-195; flutes, mm. 193-195]

Ever onward, the crowd of voices builds. Then, all at once, the path to the light is found: a magnificent, metallic, gleaming C major shines out, broad tam-tam beats sound like bells, woodwinds are jubilant, powerful double-stop harmonies sound from the strings, and above all, the paradise theme shines in victorious, shimmering trumpets:



[Example 4-29: trumpet, horns, mm. 211-215]²⁹

A mighty pedal point on G begins to thunder, and the goal appears to have moved into immediate proximity. Suddenly, everything is violently changed, and the already opened gates of heaven are slammed shut with a thrusting repulsion:



[Example 4-30: trumpets, cellos, basses, horns, bassoons, mm. 221-224]

A trumpet signal sounds through the confusion like a call to assembly:



[Example 4-31: trumpets, mm. 230-234; oboes and clarinets, m. 234]³⁰

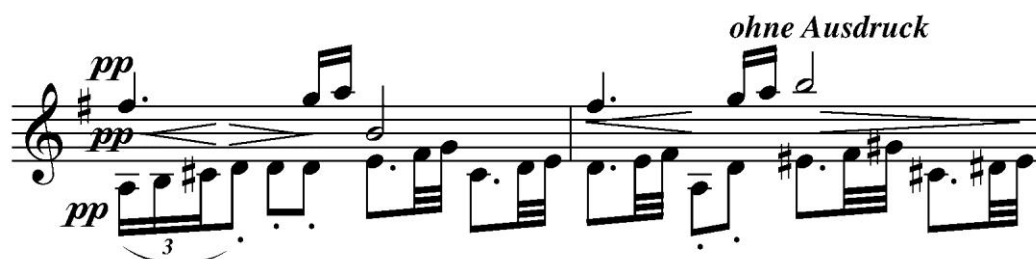
Over this, placed a third higher, lies the distorted, elongated opening of the first theme, concluding like a question, half resigned, half expectant, “without expression” (“ohne Ausdruck”), breaking off in the fourth measure, as if helpless, with a general pause:



[Example 4-32: oboes and clarinets, mm. 234-238; bassoon, m. 238 (second half)]³¹

[154] What is it? Was perhaps the entire essence of this supernatural manifestation, the upswing, the vision of paradise—was this all only a dream or a fantastic hallucination? One rubs the eyes, pauses, and suddenly realizes with a smile that it was certainly only a nocturnal spell. The world and everything in it is still exactly as it was before. It is “now” and remains the “eternal now.” “Again as at the beginning, very leisurely, comfortably” (“Wieder wie zu Anfang, sehr gemächlich, behaglich”), the philistine theme sounds again, following precisely from where it had awakened astonished from the dream-heavy slumber, now continuing cheerfully and calmly. It is one of the most attractively “contrived” transitions to the recapitulation, this connection from the close of the development to the reprise of the main material through the theme that is divided between them. The listener hardly notices how the fleeting general pause fermata here gently transports him back into the main section. This main section now sings out exactly as complacently and naturally as it had before. Animated by the experiences of the dream, the tone is somewhat livelier than in the beginning, and the whole proceeds forward more quickly. All forces remain tightly concentrated. They are now primarily directed toward the intonation,

indicated with “broad strokes” (“großer Strich”), “sweepingly” (“schwungvoll”), and “with grand tone” (“mit großem Ton”)—Mahler can hardly do enough for himself here in his demands for voluminous sound effects—of the powerfully sweeping song theme. Its enthusiasm increases to the highest intensity of feeling and momentum—“change the bow” (“Bogen wechseln”), Mahler prescribes to the violins as an affect to achieve the utmost fullness of sound—but breaks down, similar to the first time, into the “suddenly slow and thoughtful” (“plötzlich langsam und bedächtig”) duet in the repulsing voices of the winds. The opposition, however, is mitigated this time by the exchange of the piercing oboe for the clarinet, and a melodic contrapuntal phrase in the violins gives this wind passage a tenderly lyrical frame:



[Example 4-33: violins, 1st clarinet, mm. 285-286]

The disquiet and the rushing motivic entanglement that followed this episode the first time now also appear to be weakened, no longer excited by frightening expectations and only moved by recollections of what has passed. At the end, a delicately woven, atmospheric mist envelops the entire intimate image of spiritual life. “Quietly and becoming ever more calm” (“Ruhig und immer ruhiger werdend”), the violins climb to shimmering high notes. Tenderly floating, the theme fades up and away:



[Example 4-34: second violins, mm. 330-333]

From the depths the horn lets its farewell call, which begins impetuously and then likewise drifts away, “slowly” (“*langsam*”) sound out:



[Example 4-35: horn, mm. 336-338]

There now follows one of the most intimate episodes of this piece that is so rich in lovely features. Beginning “very restrained” (“*sehr zurückhaltend*”) and continuing to sing “very slowly and somewhat hesitantly” (“*sehr langsam und etwas zögernd*”), the *grazioso* theme is sounded out one more time in the violins, but this time underlain with C major instead of G major, obtaining through this change in the previous³² harmony an attraction of unspeakably fine and delicate poignancy, a smile under tears. Everything philistine, narrow, and small in concept has now disappeared, and there remains only the still magic of former time, of blissful memory. Yet only for a few measures, like the dream of a dream. *Poco a poco stringendo*, [155] the voices rapidly swell and press on again. In cheerful Allegro, the piece breaks off with a jovial marching song:



[Example 4-36: first violins, mm. 345-346 (or woodwinds, mm. 346-347)]

“**Freund** Hein spielt auf” (“Death Begins to Play”), Mahler originally headed the Scherzo-Rondo. Death, or Freund Hein, as Matthias Claudius³³ calls him, not a wicked, terrible god, but a friendly guide to the next world who enticingly escorts his flock with the fiddle. Of course, the fiddle sounds weird, shrill, and hollow, lacking the lush tone, warm with life, of the earthly instrument. Mahler indicates that all the strings should be tuned a whole step higher:



[Example 4-37: A–E–B–F-sharp *scordatura* violin tuning]

In this way, he achieves the lurid³⁴ tone that gives eeriness to the expression. The further stylization of the movement also deviates from the usual, creating a weird and fantastic atmosphere. It awakens memories of the funeral march in the First Symphony and of the Fish Sermon Scherzo in the Second, and yet, in relation to these earlier pieces that have some similarity in nature, it signifies something new. In the two earlier movements, it was particularly the handling of rhythm that achieved the unusual effects. This time, melodic direction and harmony become especially pointed in expression. The augmented triad provides the basic color in vertical harmonic sound position as well as in horizontal melodic sequence. All means of instrumental color come to their best advantage in cleverly distributed application: muting,

sharply stroked *pizzicati*, *col legno*, murmuring fingerboard and eerily buzzing bridge effects in the strings, stopped brass, suddenly forward-driving, shrill solo effects of the woodwinds, surprising *sforzati*, rhythmic displacements, piercing and frightening contrasts in dynamics. The movement does not remain in the ghostly sphere throughout, however. It obtains its particular color through the interplay between the expression of the uncanny and the idyllic, through the naïvely drastic way in which the activity of the departed souls on the field of death is depicted from the grisly side as well as from the peacefully contended side. Just as in the first movement and later in the last movement, masterful humor carries the whole and firmly holds to the character of a surreal fairy tale. It is the idea of play from which the whole work springs. There is no realistically perceived world, only one that is imagined, a shadowy play of cheerful and demonic forces that entwine themselves within each other in a fantastic round dance.

“In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast” (“In leisurely motion, without haste”), a single horn call rings out, repeated like a signal, and answered by giggling *staccato* woodwinds:



[Example 4-38: horn, oboes, bassoon, mm. 1-4, with upbeat]

“Very driven” (“Sehr zufahrend”), “like a fiddle” (“wie eine Fidel”) in sound, the discordant play of the principal violinist commences:



[Example 4-39: solo violin, mm. 6-10]

The remaining strings, all muted with the exception of the soloist, [156] accompany. A brief little interlude in the woodwinds with a sharply ascending periodic ending interrupts:



[Example 4-40: oboes, flutes, bassoon, mm. 22-26]

Then the soloist starts again and leads his melody to its conclusion. It merges into a surprisingly mild, almost sweet C major. Deep held unison sounds from horns and clarinet on C provide the primarily dark color, and from the harp it sounds like a soothing bell chime. In the violins, quiet, melodic major-key sounds soar in:



[Example 4-41: first violins, mm. 34-41]

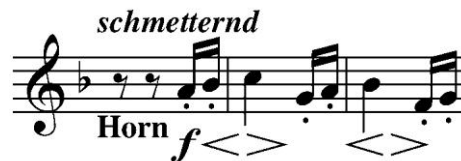
But the friendly mood only holds for a few moments. The fiddler enters again in brusque *fortissimo* while the accompanying voices in the divided strings multiply, becoming stronger.

The mutes disappear, and in forceful C minor, the theme abruptly concludes. The horn calls, this time in a considerably lower register, supported by contrabassoon and string basses, as if from distant, remote regions:



[Example 4-42: contrabassoon, horn, basses, mm. 63-65]

In an altered character, the answer sounds. The burdensome, oppressive aspect has vanished, and the call sounds joyfully, invitingly, “belted out” (“schmetternd”):



[Example 4-43: horn, mm. 68-70]

The key turns toward F major. Beginning *fortissimo*, the clarinet strikes up a “merry” (“lustig”) dance tune, a somewhat stiff-legged, happily trilling, lazily revolving Ländler:



[Example 4-44: clarinet, mm. 71-75]

The oboes take up the tune, and the violins add to it a longingly rising chromatic counterpoint that continues in a tenderly singing melody:



[Example 4-45: first violins, mm. 81-94]

“Impudently” (“Frech”), right at the rapturous sweep up to A, the clarinet drives in with its dance motive:



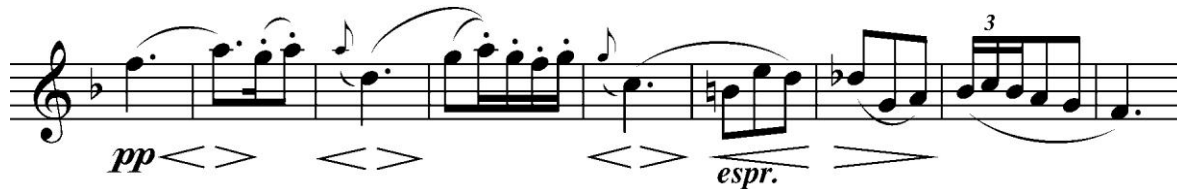
[Example 4-46: clarinets, m. 90]

This setting shows the origin of the “cheeky, merry” (“frech lustig”) tune: it is a reorganization of the third measure in the E-major melody from the Finale:



[Example 4-47: 4th movement, first violins with flute doubling, mm. 125-129]

What will eventually become transfigured there appears here as a crudely bumbling apparition. But the joyous song of the violins will not be disturbed. The melody gushes further in yearning, expressive turns, accompanied romantically by the horn quartet:



[Example 4-48: violins, mm. 94-102]³⁵

The image shifts: the first horn call resounds anew, the fiddler starts up “passionately” (“leidenschaftlich”) with his dry melody, new secondary voices are heard, including [157] a “merrily emerging” (“lustig hervortretend”) one in the first horn:



[Example 4-49: horn, mm. 128-131]

The peaceful C-major vision and the “passionate” (“leidenschaftlich”) solo melody take over from each other once again. It is almost the image of the medieval dance of death with its alternation between friendly and gloomy pictures.³⁶ So also the lyrical song melody appears for a second time, now presented more extensively than before. From F major it rises to D major, and thereby entwines a promise of the future: a prophecy of peace and joy that someday the heavenly life will bring to the current entourage of Freund Hein. Two times, a premonition of the song from the hereafter is heard. First in the violins is a reference to the melody set to the

words “Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten sind treffliche Hofmusikanten” (“Cecilia and her kinfolk are excellent court musicians”):



[Example 4-50: first violins, mm. 212-216, second violins, m. 217]

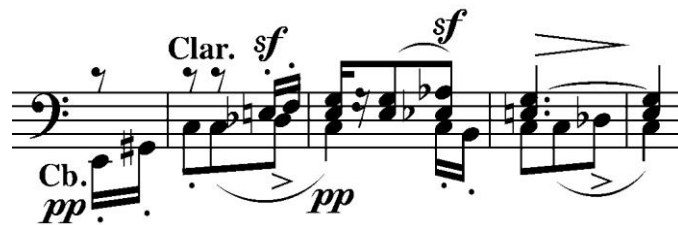
The second allusion is brought by the clarinets at the D-major turn, “expanding even more” (“sich noch mehr ausbreitend”):



[Example 4-51: clarinets, mm. 254-265; bassoons, mm. 257-264; flutes, m. 260; oboes, mm. 262-265]

It is an extensive anticipation of the E-major melody of the Finale that was hinted at just previously. While these directions to the future run more presciently than consciously through the accompanying voices, the song melody spreads out in the violins in an almost lavish revelry of feeling. The gray landscape of the death procession has vanished, and a warm D-major sun shines. Even the song of the fiddler no longer sounds “violently driven” (“heftig zufahrend”). Despite the dissonant intervals, the expression is softened, “*grazioso, espressivo*,” and also does

not sound in the lurid tone of the re-tuned violin, but rather in the natural tuning. But the calm does not last long. Gradually, the violent accents and broken sound effects increase. The C-major theme is rhythmically disturbed as the accents shift to the weak second beat, thus bringing restlessness to the picture. The harmonies thrust chromatically into each other without achieving clarity of key, the melodic sounds become tangled in dissonant evasions and twists, and the whole sinks from measure to measure into a shadowy gloom. At the end, only the horn motive of the beginning still remains. It now sounds from the string basses and obtains a harmonic addition from the clarinets:



[Example 4-52: basses and clarinets, mm. 355-359]

This last motion also quietly darkens. Then, suddenly, a glaring woodwind cry—and the apparition vanishes.

“**Ruhevoll**” (“Peacefully”) is the heading of the third movement. “Poco Adagio” stands behind it in brackets, more a performance than a character indication. The model of the grand, comprehensive Adagio, as it had been in the Finale of the Third, has here already moved further back for Mahler. In the Fourth, the ground has not been plowed enough to allow an Adagio that commences with strong energy and tension to take root. The spiritual realm is, with all the loveliness [158] of the first movement and all the fantasy of the second, still too narrow to give

room to far-reaching expressions of feeling. But the position of the two preceding movements in this work is at any rate completely different than in earlier cases. Both have only a preparatory significance. It is the task of the later portions to consolidate emotionally the tones that were only struck as a light prelude in the preceding movements, and to internalize their interpretation. The Adagio style in particular proved especially suitable for this, provided an Adagio could successfully be constructed that, following the tone and sphere of mood in the preceding movements, was capable of creating for itself, in the course of its development, forces of profundity and of a grand, captivating sweep. There was one possibility for this: the layout of the Adagio movement in variation form, the spreading and emotional heightening of an unemotional basic idea through the sharpening, stirring variation that lays bare the strongest spiritual impulses. Mahler chose this path. With that, he made the third movement the spiritual fulcrum of the work. This Poco Adagio does not bring the final resolution, it is true, but it does provide the decision about the overall character of the work: about the question of whether the play of the first two movements is just an entertaining game, or whether a profundity of life and feelings of the world, hidden within the mask of serenity, forms its basis. The third movement needed to open the view from these depths. It needed to pull the veil from the hidden grounds upon which those trifling and eerily fantastic apparitions played their game—only pulling away the veil for a moment and then immediately letting it fall again. Then the closing idyll could fully unfold without self-consciousness, similar to the opening movements, related to them in tone and character, but distinctly separated from them by one thing: by the knowledge of tragedy born through pain that only then gives the play its inner freedom and meaning. This knowledge is conveyed and proclaimed by the Adagio. Unpretentiously singing, it commences, in

constantly increasing self-disclosure of the artful variations, leading up to the heights of that dreamland of which the opening movements only offer a dull, earthly colored or obscure reflection. It is the idea of the ascent, of liberating that which is bound, that here determines the character of the main idea as well as its formal expansion, and with that provides the symphony, beyond its refined artistic charm, its deep tone of feeling. This movement, in its profoundly swelling melodic character and the transfigured expression that indicates the path to transcendent regions, belongs to Mahler's most intimate creations. Even more: in it is shown an ability to make the celestial and the invisible comprehensible to the ear and conceivable to the senses, an ability that reaches far beyond all boundaries of cognition and gives a moving testimony for the revelatory power of music in general.

Divided cellos and violas begin in a very tenderly swaying, softly tinted fundamental color. The melody is assigned to the upper cellos. Beginning "very songfully" ("sehr gesangvoll"), *pianissimo*, it is directed upward, scale-like, in noble calm from measure to measure. It is like the view of an eye that is slowly opening, that seeks to grasp a new world. The melody thus rises in the first eight measures, gradually passing from the whole-note motion into a more lively rhythmic flow. At the close of the first period, it quickly reverts again to the starting point. A longing two-measure [159] motive initiates a new, upward-directed motion, pressing "with rising expression" ("im Ausdruck steigernd") out of the G-major circle and further toward D-major. A lucid calm streams out of the broadly layered harmonies that initially only alternate between tonic and dominant. The voices spin into each other in a most tender *legato*, and only the string basses accompany in bell-like *pizzicato* strokes:



[Example 4-53: violas, cellos, basses, mm. 1-16 (violas and lower cellos omitted, mm. 12-15)]

It is a calm that wishes to unfold into motion, a restrained force that wishes to be released into action. The main formal and poetic idea of the movement is the opening of this force, directing it to the final goal that is achievable precisely by means of its awakening and becoming conscious. The first half of the melody is repeated twice, first in a light motion through the cellos, then in an ethereal heightening of the sound by the violins playing in octaves. Both times, a longing, eloquent counterpoint provides a new impulse to motion:



[Example 4-54: second violins, upper voice of cellos, mm. 17-24]

With the elevation to the high sonic regions, the strength of development that the melody carries within itself is exhausted. In peaceful horn chords, it sinks down again stepwise:



[Example 4-55: horns, bassoons, cellos (upper voice only, mm. 31-33), mm. 31-36]

The strings sink to the depths as well, closing like a prayer:



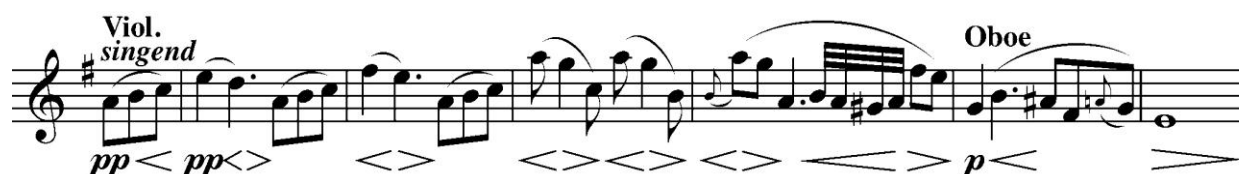
[Example 4-56: violins, violas, mm. 45-51 (some second violin notes omitted)]

The melody dies away, and the harmonies sound quietly after it, mingling into each other. The bell strokes of the basses fade, and the picture dissolves like a vision whose strength is not yet sufficient to hold. “Lamenting” (“Klagend”), the oboe enters “very expressively” (“sehr ausdrucksfull”) in a new tempo, “much slower” (“viel langsamer”). In the bassoons, a reminiscence of the bell motive of the basses throbs as an accompanying voice, and resounding horn sounds provide a sparse harmonic filling:



[Example 4-57: oboe, bassoons, horns, mm. 62-66 (without m. 62 in horns 1-2), violas and cellos, m. 66]

“Singing” (“Singend”), the violins expand, emphatically increasing the expression from measure to measure until, from the high point of A, it falls again, exhausted, to the depths:



[Example 4-58: first violins, mm. 66-71, oboe, mm. 71-72]

Once more, reaching more widely, thrusting “passionately” (“leidenschaftlich”) with a sharper tension of forces, the onset begins. The expression intensifies to a powerful [160] buildup and expansion, traversed by sharply incisive chromatic lines:



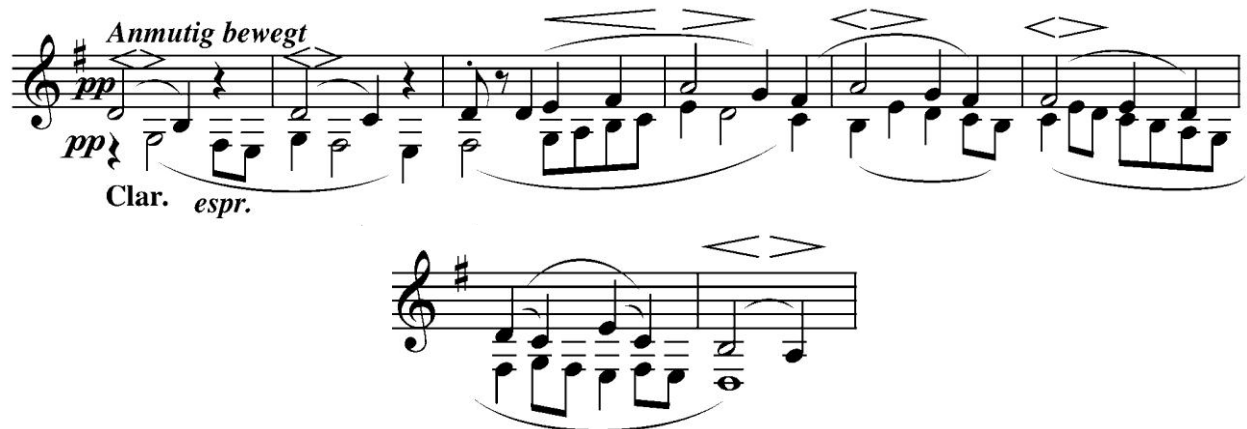
[Example 4-59: full orchestra (strings woodwinds, horns, trumpets), mm. 87-90, one descending line omitted in mm. 89-90]

Then it slumps to a melancholy lament, into which the bell motive, now assigned to the solo violin, clarinet, and harp, slowly sounds, as if dripping:



[Example 4-60: second violins *pizzicato*, solo violin, flute, horn, harp, mm. 97-100]

Now there is a sudden change. It is as if the lamenting interlude has loosened the restrained forces of the first melody so that they break free from the solemn calm of the opening and unfold their own impulses to motion. From the D-minor conclusion of the interlude, a gentle dominant seventh chord on B-flat leads surprisingly back to G major. The first theme appears again, but now varied, “gracefully moving” (“anmutig bewegt”), lightly flowing in tempo, the melody divided into half-measure, upward-striving phrases, to which are added an expressive, singing *legato* counterpoint in the clarinet:



[Example 4-61: clarinet and top voice of cellos, mm. 107-114]

As before, the melody and countermelody now also gradually rise up into the higher register. As before, the play of voices quietly dissolves again after a gentle interweaving. The appearance, this time closer, more comprehensible, and revealing itself as more full of life than before, escapes for a second time without having brought any direct impact, recovery, or liberation. For the second time, the lament commences, sharper and more biting than before. In long resounding tones, the oboe begins over the harsh, dissonant E-flat of the horn:



[Example 4-62: oboe and horn, mm. 174-178]

This time, there are several voices that come together in the lament: horn, English horn, and oboe:



[Example 4-63: English horn and horn, mm. 179-181, oboe, mm. 180-181]

Flutes and cellos enter in, a passionate outburst drives toward C-sharp minor, and the melody sounds austere from the horns, supplemented by the violins with intense agitation:



[Example 4-64: second violins and horns, mm. 192-194, first violins, mm. 193-194]

Mightily reaching out, the lament thrusts upward in C-sharp minor from the low strings:



[Example 4-65: violas and cellos, mm. 195-197]

“Passionately and somewhat urgently” (“Leidenschaftlich und etwas drängend”), the tension is driven further, resting on F-sharp-minor harmonies, then quietly, dreamily sliding to F-sharp major, and from here, as if unexpectedly, almost unintentionally flowing into the second variation of the opening theme. Now it appears still freer than before, in an almost dance-like, striding Andante:



[Example 4-66: top voice of cellos, mm. 222-229, with upbeat from lower voice of cellos in m. 221]³⁷

Now a strange development takes place. In the moment where the repetition should begin, a new picture forces its way in: in the place of the Andante comes [161] Allegretto subito, $\frac{3}{8}$ time, and this new tempo appears “without the slightest mediation” (“ohne die geringste Vermittlung”)—it presses, as it were, the previous, not yet closed off tempo impatiently to the side:



[Example 4-67: first violins, mm. 238-243]

This appearance also fares as had the previous one. “Likewise suddenly and surprisingly as before” (“Ebenso plötzlich und überraschend wie vorher”), the Allegretto changes into Allegro subito. Not only the tempo, but also the key and meter change abruptly from G major $\frac{3}{8}$ to E major $\frac{2}{4}$:



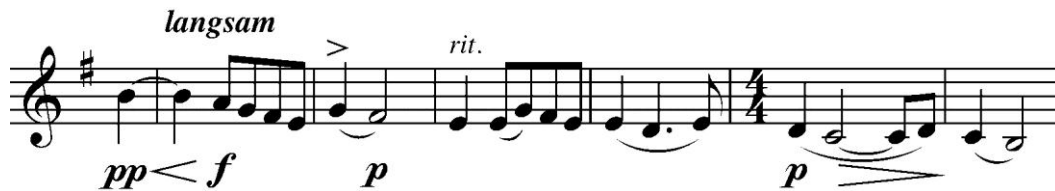
[Example 4-68: second violins and cellos, mm. 263-266; flutes and oboes, mm. 267-270, clarinets, mm. 268-269, trumpets, m. 270]³⁸

Winds now take the lead. Both groups, strings and woodwinds, come together in the last Allegro molto tempo increase, which flows again into G major with unrelenting, urgent strength, heightening the theme, as it were, to an almost mechanical agility in the utmost freedom of rhythmic swing:



[Example 4-69: oboes, clarinets, bassoons 1 and 2, violas, top voice of cellos, mm. 278-281]

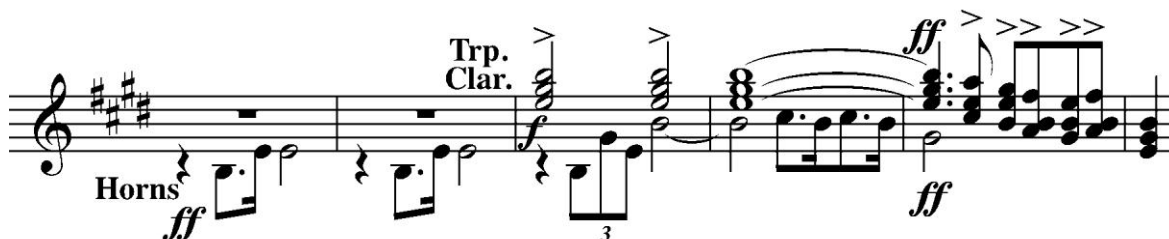
Into this play of forces that finally achieves its full resolution suddenly breaks in, Andante subito, as if reminiscent and admonishing to reflection, the opening tempo of the variation:



[Example 4-70: horns, mm. 282-288]

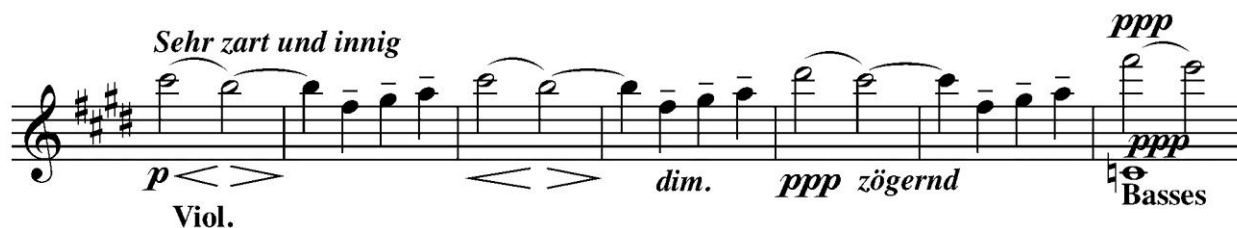
Solemn stillness and peacefulness enter. The intimate closure of the Poco Adagio sounds again, with earnest harmonies sliding into one another like an organ in very slow, slurred motion and mystically blurred colors. Yet this is all different than at the beginning of the movement, no longer filled with longing uncertainty and suppressed urges, but rather carried by the consciousness of the formative, creative force that has revealed itself in the vitality of images within the variations. This force, now only artificially dammed up while internally unleashed, here takes up the last, decisive onset. With elevated enthusiasm, violins and flutes suddenly

swing to E major, and in roaring jubilation, the full orchestra storms after them. It is a moment of shattering effect, this powerful blaze of full sound, the undulation of the string arpeggios, the harp *glissandi*, and the solemnly beaming splendor of the wind harmonies. From this new, last height now resound the tidings of paradise from horns and trumpets with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter auf”):



[Example 4-71: horns, mm. 318-322 (first half), trumpets (with optional clarinet support), mm. 320-323]

There lies the country that has been sought, of which the trumpets already told in the first movement, to which secret voices pointed in the scherzo, and to attain which all forces of prayer and lament were called forth in the third movement. Now it shows itself in its radiant glory—and as if blinded, the eyes close: “very tenderly and intimately” (“sehr zart und innig”), delicately slurred harmonies lead from E major, over a serious and dark C major, back again to G major:



[Example 4-72: first violins, mm. 326-332, lower cellos and basses, m. 332]

Ever more softly it fades away, as if earthly harmonies were too material for these [162] spheres, and, “dying completely away” (“gänzlich ersterbend”), the piece trails off as if uncompleted on a D-major half-close.

The last picture: fields of heaven, distance from the world, play, dance, magic of paradise: “What the Child Tells Me.” The original heading did not survive. Here, in isolation, it would also not fit as it would for the Third Symphony, where it would have corresponded to the other headings. Even without a descriptive title, this music and text speak of the happiness found in the country where a childlike faith and joy have been rediscovered, of the land that the poetic imagination of the people has dreamed in order to portray their blissful yearning. Goethe characterized the song “Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen” (“The heavens are full of fiddles”) as a “Christian Cockaigne, not without spirit.”³⁹ The afterthought would have probably come across as a more positive approval if Goethe had here particularly noted the musical mood of the poem. The concept of “Cockaigne,” the land of milk and honey,⁴⁰ corresponds at any rate to the narrative portion of the poem, which tells of dancing and leaping, of butchering and baking, of fishing and cooking in heaven. The concept does not, however, exhaust the lyrical content that is expressed in the tone of the presentation as well as in the introductory and closing verses. The opening:

“Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,
Drum tun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich Getümmel
Hört man nicht im Himmel!
Lebt alles in sanfter Ruh.”

“We enjoy the heavenly delights,
And thus avoid earthly things.
No worldly turmoil
Is heard in heaven!
Everything lives in gentlest calm.”

points to a fantasy world that is substantially different from the utopian Cockaigne.⁴¹ It shows a sort of Christian asphodel field where the souls of the departed live in eternal, serene peace.

Wir führen ein englisches Leben,
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben.

We lead an angelic life,
But are nonetheless cheerful as well.

After these words, the cozy description of the activities on the heavenly fields begins, whose broad depiction takes up the greater portion of the poem, although for Mahler it is of secondary consideration compared with the primarily lyrical musical mood. Hence, in the composition, he also cut some lines here. In exchange, the closing strophe of the poem is emphasized all the more emphatically, led into by these words:

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.

No music exists on the earth
That can be compared to ours.

Here as well, it is not the depiction of a utopian life that permeates the music, but rather of a transfiguration. This transfiguration gives the work its exceptional place in Mahler's oeuvre and exalts it to one of the most gratifying images of the world that an artist has ever created.

Mahler uses the lightest resources for the presentation of the song. Everything that is in any way massive or heavy must be avoided, and the feeling of soaring, of [163] being freed from all material things must be awakened in the listener. The vocal solo is assigned to a soprano. Although no *attacca* is expressly prescribed, the movement follows directly upon the D-major

half-close of the Adagio. The pastoral main theme sounds from the clarinet, while strings and harp add simple undulating accompanying voices. Everything is kept as unpretentious and undemanding as possible. After a single preparatory statement of the melody, the voice begins its lightly trilling song:



[Example 4-73: voice, mm. 12-14, first line of text]

The presentation becomes a bit more animated and fluent in the song and in the gracefully colored accompaniment at the depiction of the piously merry life of heaven's inhabitants:



[Example 4-74: voice, mm. 24-28, text “Wir führen . . . ganz lustig daneben,” as above]

Wir tanzen und springen,
Wir hüpfen und singen.

We dance and leap,
We skip and sing.



[Example 4-75: voice with harmonies (flutes, horns, harp), mm. 36-38 with vocal upbeat, text “Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!” (“St. Peter in heaven looks on!”)]

Here is not only Mahler's characteristic mystical harmonic effect: parallel octaves and fifths in stepwise rising and falling triads. Here is above all the direct reminiscence of the angel song in the Third symphony, "Ich hab übertreten die zehn Gebot" ("I have broken the ten commandments") and "Ach komm und erbarme dich" ("Ah, come and have mercy").

Immediately thereafter is a second reminiscence, this time not of the Third, but of the first movement of the Fourth Symphony. "With sudden, fresh motion" ("Plötzlich frisch bewegt") sounds the introductory sleigh bell motive, here however, as indicated in the score, "more active than in the corresponding passages in the first movement" ("bewegter als an den korrespondierenden Stellen im ersten Satz"). It is also more broadly executed here, with the reed pipe theme of the song melody interwoven in minor—as if it is only now in the right place here, where it can fully sing itself out and leap about, while it always took only a brief course in the first movement and was then immediately interrupted by themes of a different nature. Now there comes the description of the heavenly life with the playful guise of mysterious and deep things:

Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,
 Der Metzger Herodes drauf passet!
 Wir führen ein geduldig's,
 Geduldig's unschuldig's,
 Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
 Sankt Lukas den Ochsen tät' schlachten,
 Ohn' einig's Bedenken und Achten,
 Der Wein kost kein Heller
 Im himmlischen Keller,
 Die Englein, die backen das Brot.

John lets the little lamb out,
 The butcher Herod keeps watch!
 We lead a patient,
 Patient, innocent,
 A sweet little lamb to its death!
 St. Luke slaughters the ox,
 Without a single concern or care.
 The wine does not cost a cent
 In the heavenly cellar,
 The angels, they bake the bread.

[164] Gut Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
 Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten.
 Gut' Spargel, Fisolen
 Und was wir nur wollen!
 Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!

Good greens of all kinds
 Do grow in the heavenly garden.
 Good asparagus and beans
 And whatever we may want!
 Full bowls are prepared for us!

Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut' Trauben!
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben!
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen,
Auf offener Straßen
Sie laufen herbei!

Good apples, pears, and grapes!
The gardeners allow it all!
If you want deer or rabbit
In the open streets,
They come running!

Sollt ein Fasttag etwa kommen,
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden
angeschwommen!
Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter
Mit Netz und mit Köder
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!

If a fast day should come about,
All fishes in the same way, with joy,
swim here!
St. Peter is already running
With net and bait
Into the heavenly pond.
St. Martha must be the cook!

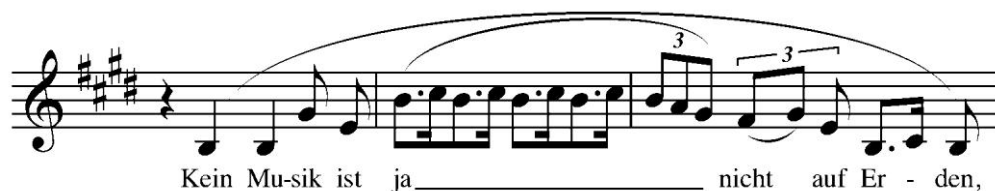
Here as well there are echoes and references to earlier things. At the slaughtering of the lamb and the ox in the accompanying voices is a clear reference to the pitiful motive of pain in the angel choir: “Und sollt' ich nicht weinen, Du gütiger Gott” (“And should I not weep, Thou gracious God”). In addition, at the close of each verse, like a sudden scare and the most inwardly emerging consciousness of the opposition between the merriness in the external atmosphere and the deeply serious meaning of the playful narrative, are those mystical chord sequences that are common to the contrasting opposition in both symphonies. The depiction of the deer, rabbits, and fishes that offer themselves to those who desire them is amusingly urgent. After this painting of heavenly existence is once again the merry ringing that always leads from image to image, from sphere to sphere, and which now, losing itself in quietly murmuring runs, leads over into an idyllic, swaying E major: “Very tender and mysterious until the end” (“Sehr zart und geheimnisvoll bis zum Schluß”). Deep harps and string bass *pizzicati* beat out the harmony *pianissimo* while the pastoral appoggiatura motive of the song theme sounds from the

English horn. In addition, there is a new and serenely graceful paradise melody, the last, purest, and most tender:



[Example 4-76: first violins and flute, mm. 125-128]

Muted violins and flute intone it. One already knows it from the Scherzo, where it appeared prophetically, but only here is it able to properly unfurl its intimate sweetness and oblivious grace, its soaring lightness. And what it has to say is also the last: the glorification of music, which looses all bonds, which casts off all heaviness, which forgives all persons of good will their sins, takes away their pain, and opens paradise to them:



[Example 4-77: voice, mm. 142-144, text “Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,” (“There is no music on Earth”)]

Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.
 Elftausend Jungfrauen
 [165] Zu tanzen sich trauen!
 Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
 Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
 Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!
 Die englischen Stimmen
 Ermuntern die Sinnen,
 Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

That can be compared to ours.
 Eleven thousand maidens
 Dare to dance!
 Even St. Ursula smiles at it!
 Cecilia and her kinsfolk
 Are excellent court musicians!
 The angelic voices
 Enliven the senses
 So that everything awakens for joy.

“So that everything awakens for joy”—that is the message of this work. The bringer of joy is music. Its praise has already been sung so often and in the most varied ways, but seldom or hardly ever in such an unpretentious, outwardly humorous⁴² impression, and yet at the same time an impression pervaded by the innermost tenderness and emotion. A very deep and intimately tender experience has here made itself into sound and obtained form, and has found in this sound and in this form its redemption, its liberation. Thus it has performed this song of the heavenly joys. Thus it has shaped these melodies for itself, whose last and most beautiful is like a lullaby with which all pain and all lamenting, all that is disturbing and transient, has been quietly lulled to sleep. In its soft sounds they sink, as do the sounds themselves, fading more and more into the distance, appearing to ring into an intangible eternity.

The Fourth Symphony is a concluding work. It is this in three respects: with respect to the musical form, with respect to the material of poetic thought, and with respect to the world view of the creative artist. The musical form shows in every respect, in terms of acoustic, instrumental, intellectually constructive, and architectonic design, the requirement of a restriction to the essentials that is always a sign of maturity and assured mastery. All means are tested; their fullness and plurality is no longer stimulating, only their usefulness is decisive. This condensation of the form arose as a consequence of the condensation of the material. The struggle for knowledge, for the knowledge of humanity and earth, of death and life, of nature and God, is completed. Or rather, it has advanced to a level of maturity where the need to use art as a medium for the harnessing of experiential substance is diminished, and the pure joy in formation yields to deep, inwardly lying truths. The creator no longer gives birth under severe pains. He

forms with a free, light hand: he plays. This absolute control of form and material, this compelling of artistic material under the firm grip of the will, is the fruit of the new world view to which Mahler has grown out of the battles of the previous works. With the gain of this world view, he leaves the spell of thoughts and moods that had influenced and directed his output to this point: the cycle of *Wunderhorn* songs.

Among the published songs of Mahler there are, besides a set of rather insignificant youthful pieces, 21 songs to *Wunderhorn* texts, not counting the three specifically composed for the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies. Among these songs are found a number of subtly designed, humorous pieces, from [166] which a highly fantastic and yet humanly comprehensible and compassionate artist speaks. “Lob des hohen Verstandes” and above all the “Fischpredigt” are counted here. In their mixture of humor and satire, they correspond better to Mahler’s wit, colored with parody, than poems of a purely humorous character such as “Starke Einbildungskraft” or “Selbstgefühl.” One can generally say that pieces full of strongly contrasting mixtures of feeling stimulate Mahler more vividly than those held to more simple paths of expression. In these, he assays a popular style which, because the internal personal, passionate contrast is absent, easily obtains something forced or artificial, such as “Zu Straßburg” or “Rheinlegendchen.” In the other case, by contrast, particularly when demonic ideas are awakened, he succeeds with pieces of such strong and compelling force as “Der Schildwache Nachtlied,” “Tamboursg’sell,” “Nicht Wiedersehen,” “Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen,” and above all the truly ingenious and intentionally shattering “Revelge,” upon whose musical formation Goethe’s words about the poem can be applied without restriction: “Priceless for him who can follow his imagination.”⁴³

Mahler found materials of this kind, in the best and purest combination he desired, in the *Wunderhorn*, at least during the time up to the conclusion of the Fourth Symphony. That which particularly compelled Mahler to the *Wunderhorn* texts in this time was his propensity for the metaphysical. With respect to content, this propensity caused the strict ethical tendency in Mahler's output. In relation to material and form, it led him, who was averse to intellectual debate and was primarily anxious to act upon the imagination and the soul, to the symbolism of the mystic. He found the symbols that he sought prefigured in the *Wunderhorn* poetry with its mixture of naïveté and profundity.⁴⁴ The simplest, yet at the same time most poignant problems of a primitive world view and view of life: thoughts about Becoming and passing away, about life in nature, about this world and the next, offered themselves to him here in a verbally naïve and graphic, and thereby forcefully powerful representation, so that the only question was finding a corresponding musical style for the woodcut-like manner of these verses. A certain incongruity between poetry and music, however, would of necessity become noticeable in the process, for the naïveté of the poems is primordial and unsophisticated, while that of the music is rooted in the yearning of a spiritually harrowed soul for this lost simplicity. Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs are therefore, despite their external simplicity, not actually stylistic unities in word and tone, but speculative ones. They merge within themselves two contrasting worlds of feeling and create out of this very fusion their special artistic appeal. Precisely because of this, Mahler could not be satisfied with composing the song texts alone. Their content gave him occasion for extensive confrontation with his own nature placed in opposition to them. They were therefore further shaped,⁴⁵ after he had initially composed them individually, into the embryonic cruxes of great symphonic works.

There came however for Mahler the moment where the stimulating power of this poetry expired for him, where the circle that it had opened for him had been crossed. [167] As long as it gave him material to struggle with and think about, as long as it led him to new images of life, he held firm to it. As he sang the song of the heavenly joys, however, the song of the angelic voices that enliven the senses “so that everything awakens for joy,” he was no doubt a very happy man, one who stood at the zenith of life. At the same time, however, one who either would need to stop creating or start again at the beginning. With the deep, mystical contra-E that brings the Fourth Symphony to a close, Mahler had reached the end of this world, like the wanderer of antiquity that had traversed all lands, stood on the edge of the ocean, and only saw the infinite before him. Thus, Mahler had found, in his yearning, in his urge to faith, in his deep metaphysical need, through pain and battles, through the shudders of death and the deepest experiences of nature, his way to the next world. What could be achieved upon this path, he had achieved: the gratifying certainty of inalienable power, divine love, and heavenly glory. That, however, was the last. This world had been explored, identified, and formed—it held him no longer. Only now, from this first secure summit of life, he turns his glance, which until now had only counted the afterlife as worthy, back upon this world. The world of wonders, of desiring that which is divine and distant, gradually fades and disappears. The world of the day, of being, of struggle with the powers of life, now rises up. Mankind, until now an object, now becomes the subject of the artistic creative process. In place of the quest for knowledge and of yearning for the Divine come passions and the power of fate. A new concept of the nature of symphonic art is formed. From it is born the sequence of Mahler’s three large instrumental symphonies: the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh. [168 blank]

NOTES

- 1 As mentioned by Bekker in reference to the Third Symphony on p. 252. In *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, revised and edited by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and Hamburg, Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), pp. 166-67 (Letter 181).
- 2 Bekker's citation here is the commemorative Mahler issue of *Der Merker* from March 1, 1912 (3/5), given in his bibliography. The conversation in question appeared anonymously in a portion entitled "Aus einem Tagebuch über Gustav Mahler" (pp. 184-88 at 185-86). The material is from Natalie Bauer-Lechner, whom Bekker never mentions by name and who died in 1921, shortly after his writing. It was published under her own name in *Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler*, ed. Johann Killian (Leipzig: E. P. Tal, 1923), where the passage in question is found on p. 20. See also the citation of this material in the chapter on the Third Symphony, note 30 (p. 321).
- 3 Mahler is certainly referring to Friedrich Nietzsche's *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* here, an idea strengthened by his inclusion of a Nietzsche text setting as a movement of the Third.
- 4 The first explanation is generally accepted: that "Das himmlische Leben" was planned as the Finale.
- 5 Bekker's observations here prefigure the main thesis of Donald Mitchell's analysis of the Fourth, "'Swallowing the Programme': Mahler's Fourth Symphony" in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 187-216. In this analysis, Mitchell imagines the "innocence" of the symphony as something that is mature and wise rather than "simple" and focuses on the journey to this mature innocence, including discussions of such things as the G major–E major dichotomy. He addresses and confronts Theodor Adorno's description of the Fourth as a "character symphony" (Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], pp. 52-58).
- 6 The German word, "Schlaraffenland," has the sense of a fool's paradise, or a land of idle people. "Land of milk and honey" is more accurate than "Utopia." The English equivalent "Cockaigne" is itself used by Bekker later in the paragraph. The term "Schlaraffenland" is present throughout German literature, going back at least as far as Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* from 1494, where the term "Schluraff" referred to a common pejorative to describe an oafish or lazy person. In most cases, the term is a parody of paradise. The poem "Das Schlauraffenland" by Hans Sachs dates from 1530. A painting by Pieter Breugel the Elder from 1567 is called "Das Schlaraffenland" in German and "The Land of Cockaigne" in English. Familiar later examples include the Grimm fairy tale "Das Märchen von Schlauraffenland" (1815) and, contemporary with Mahler's Fourth Symphony, the novel *Im Schlaraffenland* by Heinrich Mann (1900).
- 7 Bekker alludes here to words near the end of the Song-Finale: "Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden, die unsrer verglichen kann werden." ("There is no music on earth that can be compared to ours.")
- 8 Bekker does not cite this passage from Goethe. It can be found in his 1806 review ("Rezension") of the complete *Wunderhorn* collection: *Goethes Werke: Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand*, Band (Volume) 33 (Stuttgart & Tübingen: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1830), p. 190. Bekker's syntax here seems to imply that Goethe referred to a song of "heavenly joys," but he did not. Bekker is using the first line of the poem and Mahler's title of the song as a descriptor of the poem.
- 9 In Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen*, p. 41, worded slightly differently. Bekker again presumably refers to the anonymous publication in *Der Merker*, p. 188.

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- 10 The Nietzsche setting in the Third Symphony. Bekker again cites the title of the penultimate chapter of *Zarathustra*.
- 11 James L. Zychowicz, in his book on the symphony (*Mahler's Fourth Symphony* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000]), includes an exhaustive discussion of "Das himmlische Leben" and its life before the Fourth Symphony. His detailed outline of the preliminary sketches provides further evidence of the symphony's genesis out of the song. See pp. 35-46 and 59-93.
- 12 See previous references to this instrument on pp. 204 and 258.
- 13 Mitchell's description of the "asynchronous" effect achieved by such precise prescriptions at the opening of the first movement reinforces his thesis about the symphony's sophisticated innocence ("Swallowing the Programme," p. 207).
- 14 Bekker's detachment of the top voice of a "chorale" texture here as a "melody" creates a somewhat problematic argument here. The effect is like a soprano voice of a hymn, and the perception at this point is more a harmonic than a melodic one.
- 15 As he did with the two sketches for the program to the Third Symphony, Bekker provides the first-ever reproduction and explication of this sketch, which he obtained from Alma. The repetition of the number 5 is retained in later references to the sketch by Constantin Floros (*Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], pp. 110-11) and Donald Mitchell (*Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* [London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1975; Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976], p. 258, n. 28), both indicating that they are citing Bekker. Floros includes a "[sic]" while Mitchell assumes that Mahler repeated the number in the sketch and that Bekker is not in error. In the "Anmerkungen," Bekker indicates that the sketch is "in his possession." It is now located in the Fine Arts Collection of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (Ohio). Zychowicz (*Mahler's Fourth Symphony*, pp. 47-49) confirms the repetition of the number 5, surmising it to be a slip of the pen by Mahler. Zychowicz, with the actual sketch in hand, also provides a more accurate reproduction of the sketch than does Bekker, revealing that the numbers in question are actually roman numerals. With Bekker's observations providing a foundation, Zychowicz extensively discusses the sketch and its implications in the fourth chapter of his book. He also gives a detailed account of the relationships between the creative genesis of the Third and Fourth Symphonies (pp. 47-58).
- 16 This idea is cited by Zychowicz in *Mahler's Fourth Symphony*, pp. 55, 57.
- 17 Bekker admits in the "Anmerkungen" that he does not know the provenance of this designation for the second movement. The most familiar source for it is a letter from Bruno Walter to Ludwig Schiedermair dated 6 December, 1901. See Bruno Walter, *Briefe, 1894-1962*, ed. Lotte Walter Lindt (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1969), p. 51.
- 18 "Freund Hein" is a very old German personification of Death. It can be traced back at least to 1650. Its use by Matthias Claudius in Chapter 3 of *Sämtliche Werke der Wandsbecker Bote* (1775) is the most familiar. Claudius's poem from this collection, "Der Tod und das Mädchen," is the source for Schubert's famous song and later D-minor String Quartet. Mahler certainly knew both, and in fact, created a string orchestra version of the "Death and the Maiden" string quartet. The frontispiece illustration is highly similar to the great series of *Totentanz* woodcuts by Hans Holbein the Younger from the 1520s. The association of Holbein's woodcuts with "Freund Hein" was further propagated by Johann Rudolph Schellenberg (*Freund Heins Erscheinungen in*

Holbeins Manier [Winterthur, 1785]). The Claudius frontispiece depicts Freund Hein as a skeleton with a scythe, the familiar “Grim Reaper.” In the Fourth Symphony, Mahler, as Bekker indicates, seems to imagine a character more akin to the Pied Piper. Robert Samuels includes an extensive discussion of the “dance of death” motif, including reproductions of Holbein and later artists, in his semiotic study of the Sixth Symphony (*Mahler’s Sixth Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], pp. 119ff).

- 19 The text from “The people have still not responded to my language, however . . .” appears in Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen*, p. 35. The preceding text of this quotation is only found in the anonymous “Tagebuch” in *Der Merker*, p. 188.
- 20 Adorno’s description of this passage as a “dream ocarina” (*Mahler*, p. 53) is notable.
- 21 Cf. Bekker’s reference to the “visionary impression” of the E-major secondary theme in the Second Symphony (p. 177).
- 22 This idealization of naïveté and simplicity again calls to mind Bekker’s comments on “naïve gladness in music making” as a superior virtue in the introductory “Symphonic Style” chapter, p. 52.
- 23 Bekker refers to the Sonata, D. 850, at the G-major passage marked “Un poco più lento” in the last movement.
- 24 Hermann Kretzschmar, *Führer durch den Konzertsaal, I. Abteilung: Sinfonie und Suite*, 6th ed. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1921), p. 802. Bekker’s source was most likely the fourth edition (1912).
- 25 Bekker’s use of the word “banal” is intriguing here, and would be revisited by Adorno (*Mahler*, p. 58) and Mitchell (“Swallowing the Programme,” p. 189). Mitchell detaches Adorno’s observations from the pejorative connotations of the word “banal” and discusses the “innocence” or “state of innocence” of the work’s “characters” (the subject of Adorno’s discussion) and the final goal of the *Wunderhorn* song. Bekker’s invocation of the bourgeois “Biedermeier” style of the post-Napoleonic era is also striking in this context.
- 26 Bekker’s example curiously does not indicate the *portamento* slide from F#5 to G5, which indicates that the whole passage is played on the “mellower” A string, with no notes on the “brighter” E string.
- 27 The last *decrescendo* mark is missing in the original, but is included here. It appears in Example 4-3, which is otherwise identical.
- 28 The rhythm of the third beat in the second measure is simplified in the example, probably for practical reasons. The upper voice should be a sixteenth-note triplet followed by an eighth note. The middle voice should be two eighth notes. The D-flat and F on the last part of the beat do sound together, as indicated. In the score and the original example, it is unclear whether there should be a *staccato* dot on this last D-flat–A dyad. The same notes on the first part of beat four definitely have the *staccato* dot.
- 29 The third and fourth notes of the horns in m. 215 should be G, not E as shown in the example.
- 30 Bekker, like other commentators (e.g., Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 121-22), fails to note the obvious similarity of this trumpet call (particularly in the measures preceding the example) to the beginning and ending of the funeral march that opens the Fifth Symphony. His term “call to assembly,” however fits perfectly with the familiar designation of “der kleine Appell” for this passage as a counterpart to “der große Appell” in the Second.

See Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen*, p. 145. Zychowicz discusses the correspondence with the opening of the Fifth Symphony (*Mahler's Fourth Symphony*, p. 28).

- 31 A bar line is incorrectly inserted after the first three notes and preserved here.
- 32 Bekker uses the Italian term *tempo passato* here, which I render as “previous.” This formulation emphasizes Bekker’s perception of the harmonic shift to C major as a “blissful memory” or a “dream of a dream.”
- 33 See note 18 above.
- 34 The German word “fahl” here is quite difficult to translate in this context. The most common meaning is “pale” or “pallid.” A typical English speaker would probably not describe the effect in question in this manner. An eerie or even shrill effect is a more common perception. I have chosen the word “lurid,” which is a valid translation for “fahl.”
- 35 The penultimate note in m. 101, following the triplet, is misprinted as a sixteenth rather than an eighth in the original.
- 36 Here Bekker makes an explicit reference to the “Totentanz” motif as carried from the Holbein woodcuts through Claudius in developing the idea of “Freund Hein.”
- 37 Bekker’s indication “Viol.” here is not correct in the critical edition, where the line is played solely by cellos. The upbeat is below the range of the violin.
- 38 Bekker indicates the oboe as the leading voice throughout the passage. In the critical edition, only the two string groups are playing this line in the first four measures.
- 39 See note 8 above. Bekker here makes clear that Goethe was making his observation about the poem under its original title.
- 40 “Schlaraffenland,” see note 6 above.
- 41 “Schlaraffenland” used here by Bekker as well. I have chosen to retain the English equivalent “Cockaigne” in this context.
- 42 Bekker’s qualifier “outwardly” is significant and speaks to Mahler’s indication that the entire movement is to be performed “without parody.”
- 43 Goethe’s comment on “Revelge” in the 1806 *Wunderhorn* “Rezension,” op. cit., p. 179.
- 44 See again Schiller’s conception of “naïve and sentimental poetry,” discussed in the “Symphonic Style” chapter, p. 84, note 5.
- 45 In a typographical error, the text reads “So gestalten sich sich” instead of “So gestalten sie sich.”

[169]

SECOND CYCLE:
THE INSTRUMENTAL SYMPHONIES

[170 blank]

[171]

FIFTH SYMPHONY

[172 blank]

[173] In the summer of 1900, in Maiernigg on the Wörthersee, Mahler, aged 40, completed his Fourth Symphony. Two years later, in 1902, the Fifth, begun in 1901, was finished. The two works are separated by a distance of only a year. In the meantime came the setting of several poems by Rückert: the first three pieces from the five-part cycle of *Kindertotenlieder* and the single songs “Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder,” “Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft,” “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,” “Um Mitternacht,” and “Liebst du um Schönheit.” Shortly before the completion of the Fifth, in March 1902, Mahler married. These are the external circumstances of his life at the time.

These observations do not reveal any connecting line between the Fourth and the following symphonies. Indeed, such opposition as that which here emerges also cannot be explained by making reference to external events. What separates the Fourth as well as the preceding symphonies from the Fifth and the later symphonies is something other than a difference of individual nature. The first four symphonies are characterized by the use of song compositions, partly through expanded transcription for orchestra, and partly through direct transfer including use of the voice. For the First Symphony, Mahler had employed the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, whose texts were partially self-written, and for the Second, Third, and Fourth he used the *Wunderhorn* songs. From the Fifth Symphony on, the relationships to vocal song disappear. Not only has the occupation with the *Wunderhorn* suddenly ceased. Mahler no longer uses the voice at all in the next three works. The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies are written for orchestra alone. In addition, Mahler also refrains from transcribing songs into instrumental language, as in the First Symphony, in the “Fischpredigt” of the Second, and in the cuckoo song of the Third. The Sixth and Seventh Symphonies are free from any sort of song

elements. In the Fifth there are still reminiscences of contemporary songs, but they are for only a few completely episodic bars, and without influence on the development of the movements.¹ In compensation, the instrumental character of the symphony as an orchestral form comes more sharply to the forefront. The self-restraint to comparatively small performing forces, such as in the Fourth Symphony, is given up. A powerful apparatus comes into use, more conspicuously and consciously striving for externally massive and gigantic effect than in the earlier high-caliber works, the Second and Third Symphonies. The expressive weight is shifted more toward the character of the brass ensemble than before. Mahler's inspiration now plays with these heavy, brilliant, metallic sounds, and they provide the dimensions. Strings and woodwinds must now be subordinate, and they lose their significance as solo instruments, instead being employed for ensemble effects. This increasing relapse into the sound world of the brass instruments must have come over Mahler after completing the Fourth Symphony with such elemental force and so powerfully that the original instrumentation of the Fifth Symphony revealed itself to be impractical. Mahler completely re-orchestrated the work after the first performance. Despite this, it still suffers today under the weight of the iron armor that Mahler found necessary here.²

Architectonic and formal dimensions swelled in a similar manner to sonic ones. [174] Mahler, who had returned to the four-movement model in the Fourth Symphony, writes five movements again in the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies. The Sixth, outwardly held to four parts, brings a Finale which, in extent and content, is virtually a work for itself. The individual movements of the Fifth and Seventh also burst open the usual boundaries, showing proportions of unusual extent. In the Fifth Symphony, Mahler therefore reaches back again to the sectional structure that he had earlier used. He even designates three parts here. The first and second

movements are bound together, the gigantic Scherzo, in a similar manner to the first movement of the Third Symphony, forms a part on its own, while the Adagietto and the final Rondo are the third part. With the Sixth Symphony, the structure is again in two parts. The first movement, Andante, and Scherzo stand together opposite the colossal construction of the Finale. The Seventh Symphony is not divided through external prescription. A three-part construction emerges here—through the contrast of the two outer movements with the three shorter, more intimate middle movements—without any special indication.

In addition to the discontinued use of the song element, and in addition to orchestral, architectonic, and formal expansion, other correspondences of the three instrumental symphonies can be seen in contrast to the older works. First of all, the structure of the finale is again characteristic. Through its expressive weight, the final movement of the Sixth allows no doubt that it is the main movement of the work, and that the other three movements are actually just preludes. For the finales of the Fifth and Seventh symphonies, Mahler chose a rondo form for the first time. In old style symphonic composition, the form was the common practice for a closing movement. With the increasing significance of the closing movement, it was neglected as not weighty enough, and Mahler had only used it up to this point in a scherzo-like character. This rondo type now serves as a finale. But this is no longer the cheerful “Rondeau” based on continual alternation, the old-style round song. Bound internally through conceptual connections of a deeply organic nature to the preceding movements, the form grows up out of them, combines their powers together, and leads them to the heights with an architectonic fantasy that overreaches all the usual conceptions. In these final movements of the Fifth and Seventh symphonies, a new birth of the old rondo type is brought to pass that somewhat corresponds to

the new structuring of the fugue through Beethoven. For Mahler, it meant the change from an artistry that was sensed in a purely imaginative way to one that was consciously constructed. The same is true for the middle movements, particularly those of the scherzo type. Just as the Finale of the Fifth Symphony was Mahler's first Rondo, so also is the third movement his first Scherzo that is true to type.³ It is built according to outlines that make earlier pieces of similar character seem like miniatures. The opening movements of the Sixth and Seventh, in turn, display the sonata type with such sharp determination that in comparison to the unbridled musical exuberance of opening movements to this point, the formal precept is distinctly recognizable as the guiding force.

A significant change of Mahler's style is thus brought to pass through the turn from a symphonic composition that is interspersed with songlike and vocal elements to one that is purely instrumental. This style determines the new formal structure, and it also influences the details of [175] verbal expression. The concept of thematic development, until now a secondary concern for Mahler, and in no case something that was a determining factor or even one with actual intent, is now the formative element of the style.⁴ In the Fifth Symphony, the climactic theme of the first part, the solemn chorale into which the second movement flows, becomes the foundation of the Rondo-Finale. A melody from the Adagietto provides the secondary theme of the Rondo. In the Seventh, the main idea of the introduction is the germinal idea for an entire theme group of the first movement, and the main theme of the opening movement forms a connection to the Finale. The abundance of thematic connections within the grandiose final movement of the Sixth requires special clarification. In any case, this is not about poetic references or programmatic allusions, as for example in the most pervasive themes of the

Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies. Here is revealed that which was called symphonic thematic work in the earlier sense, which Mahler until now had avoided. The strict connection and developmental handling of thoughts, as well as the no longer impulsive, but rather thoughtful and conscious formation of expression, both acquire a new meaning for Mahler. He engages in contrapuntal techniques. The Finale of the Fifth is a double fugue with chorale that is built with astounding mastery. The Finale of the Seventh combines techniques of counterpoint and variation with a virtuosity that can be distinctly attributed to the joy in playing with sonic materials. The remaining large-scale movements of this symphonic group also distinguish themselves through a fullness of thematic combinations and intricately woven ideas.

Such a transformation of style arises as a consequence of the detachment from the vocal foundation of the symphonic composition to this point. As soon as the purely instrumental element won the upper hand, techniques and expressive types of the instrumental style naturally needed to step forward and lead. But how did this revolution and its far-reaching consequences occur? From which preconditions did it arise?

As little direct significance that lyrical song has for this new group of Mahler's symphonies, it is just as important as a mediator of the transition and as a turning point of spiritual development. Mahler composed several songs between the Fourth and Fifth symphonies. Besides singular turns of phrase and mood, nothing from them was transferred to the symphonies. At the same time they are the spiritual foundation of the following works. They have similar deep inner relationships to them as do the songs of the *Wunderhorn* cycle to the earlier symphonies. Only these relationships in the second group are of a purely ideal nature, and externally, they are hardly recognizable. Neither direct pollination nor fusion of song and

symphony comes into question. Song conquers and secures the ground upon which a new type of symphonic art grows. All the elements of formal stylistic expression—the new types of sonic organization, of architectonic and structural layout, of thematic, linear, and technical character—did not develop from a predetermined intention. They appeared as a matter of consequence. The cause lay in a crisis that shook the entire man and artist from his core. An occasion for this crisis is [176] not known. At this point there exist no personal documents about it. We do not know whether it was deep pain or greatest joy. But we have the artistic testaments for Mahler's spiritual rebirth in the songs of the transitional period. They herald an awakening to life and a freeing of the passions, struggles, and joys of the human heart in such a manner as had previously been foreign to Mahler's art. To this point, Mahler had been biased toward the mystical allure in the appearances of life and nature. That which was mysteriously impenetrable and incomprehensible to normal understanding, yet can penetrate the senses from without, had moved him powerfully and stimulated the formation of his art. He pursued this path to its extreme point in the Fourth, to that point where feeling loses its sure direction and sinks into nebulous dreaming. So the question arises: is it only that power that influences from without, be it called nature, be it called God, or be it called love, that impels? What is actually in us that determines and directs from within? Is man only a tool or an object, or is he not also will and power? The view turns inward and searches for the regulation of his inherent nature, for the streams that penetrate it, and for the elements of which it is constituted. The ego is the focal point of the action. The great powers that determine the formation of the ego come to the fore: the pains, the passions, the will to power, the will to freedom, the struggle with destiny, the happiness of creation, the power of the struggle that steels both love and loneliness, the joy of

victory. All of these elements of the internal being—which determine the Becoming of the personality—press urgently for clarity and awareness, and acquire the ultimate influence upon creation.⁵

A lyric that could have served Mahler as a direct basis for this new direction in a similar manner to the *Wunderhorn* songs did not exist. If it existed, it would have hardly been useful. This sort of conflict with the powers of one's own being was not capable of a development into words or into sung notes. In contrast to the goal of being bound by the word, it needed to lead beyond to the unfettered freedom of inventive intellectual exercise, which was made possible by the large instrumental forms of all three symphonies. The evolution ran in the opposite direction from that of the earlier works. There it was a gradual upward struggle from instrumental darkness to self-awareness through the word, here the detachment from the word to the freedom of instrumental fantasy. The word, once a goal, now became a point of departure or even a hidden foundation. It opened to the musician a new circle of creation, the gateway to himself. It gave him clarity over the conditions, internal regulations, and motivations of the new determination. For someone of Mahler's confessional nature, creation could never be "production," rather it had to be the freeing of the self from a dark burden. The burden that had newly fallen upon him needed to be recognized in the song in order to be constrained into the symphony.

Mahler found words for that which impelled him in the poems of Friedrich Rückert. How he came upon them is unknown, and it is also unknown whether personal experiences of a special kind brought him particularly close to the moods of these poems. It is easier to assume that experience in the former sense no longer had a decisive meaning for Mahler. His creation

now grew [177] from within himself, from the nature of the artist. The experience was not repeated, it was anticipated. Mahler's art began to become stronger than life. It no longer formed itself after the impressions of external happenings; rather it forced these happenings into its visionary conceptual paths. Thus, the first group of the new songs, the *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Death of Children*), was not prompted by the loss of a child. Only five years after the composition of the first three songs—the others came later—did Mahler lose his oldest daughter. The words of Rückert, then, did not move him because of any external experience. They struck into the depths of his being, in which the disposition for the new world of feelings had been formed, which now began to clarify itself under the influence of the poet's language. The determination of the new kind of viewpoint is brought about solely by the egocentricity of feelings, the opposition between individual experience and generality. The *Wunderhorn* cycle did not have this opposition. The individual as such did not come into consideration here; rather it was a representative of the species. Everything personal was expanded to general human nature. Now the relationship is reversed. "Das Unglück geschah nur mir allein, die Sonne, sie scheint allgemein" ("The misfortune happened only to me, the sun shines everywhere") says the first of the *Kindertotenlieder*. Not only pain and misfortune happen to the individual alone. He can also experience happiness and joy outside of any connection to the general public, and in opposition to it. "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" ("I am lost to the world"), "Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel, in meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied" ("I live alone in my heaven, in my life, in my song"), "Ich atmet' einen linden Duft" ("I breathed a gentle fragrance"), "Um Mitternacht hab ich gewacht" ("At midnight I watched"), "Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder" ("Do not peek at my songs"). Every one of these songs holds strongly to the first person. Each one

speaks of consciousness about opposition to the world, of loneliness that is deeply felt as painful, then gratifying, and finally, yet again of striving toward a surrender to the great whole. “Ein Lämplein erlosch in meinem Zelt, Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt.” (“A lamp went out in my tent, Hail to the joyous light of the world”). The musical formation of this salutation to the “light of the world,” the poignant turn to D-major in the first of the *Kindertotenlieder*, was transferred into the immediately following symphonic work, the Fifth:



[Example 5-1: *Kindertotenlieder*, No. 1, vocal line, mm. 75-77]

Such a sudden transfer of central feelings into the individual ego naturally must have acted deeply upon the formation of musical expression. The pointed naïveté, the folk-like elements, and the fresh directness of the *Wunderhorn* melodies, along with their dreamy romantic lines, their sharp, terse rhythms, and their preference for the simplest musical symbols and dance-like thematic characters, gave way to an intimate personal mode of expression. The melodies, beginning with the songs, receive a more artistic construction. They are moved by sharper internal contrasts, are more widely spun out, are more richly layered with chromaticism; they have a stronger lyrical breath, adhere more intimately to the text, and have more deeply subsumed that text than in the *Wunderhorn* pieces, where text and melody ran in parallel independence. In comparison to the pure homophony of the *Wunderhorn* songs, there is much effort with polyphonic voice leading. The accompaniment, as with all songs of Mahler originally and consistently written for orchestra, is in two voices in the first of the *Kindertotenlieder*, and in

p nä - her, nä - her nach der Schwel - le, *steigernd* *f* dort, dort, wo wür - de dein
lieb Ge - sicht - chen sein

The melodic lines acquire a very sensitive, almost graceful beauty, as seen right at the beginning of the first piece:

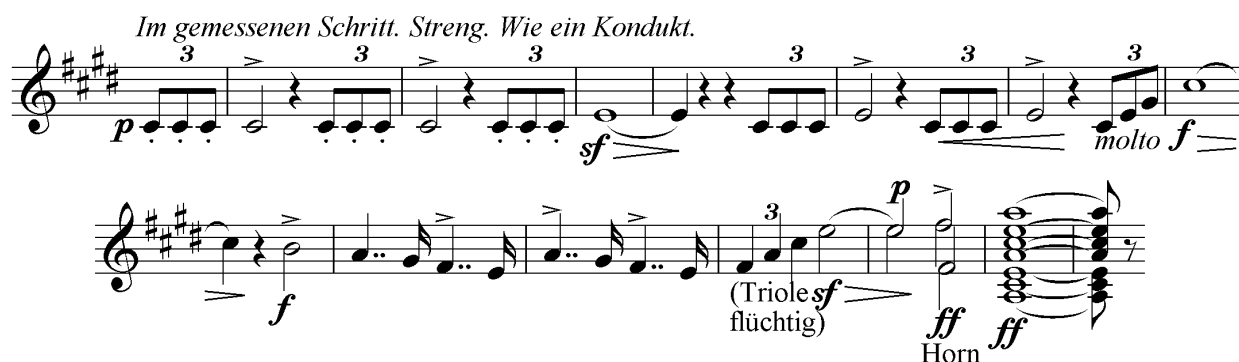


As a whole, Mahler's Rückert compositions carry more "song-like" outlines than the *Wunderhorn* pieces. As texts and as musical structures, they represent a more pure genre of lyrical art. Precisely for this reason they were not capable of any symphonic amplification. At this point for Mahler, it was not about collecting thematic or poetic material for the symphonies

in his song compositions. It was only to find and mark out the ground upon which a symphonic building could be erected. The overall character of the earlier songs had urged a symphonic expansion. Now the goal was to find an outlet to the universal meaning of a large symphonic form from the more personal song idea that was only turned toward the ego, to once again comprehend the world from the ego. It meant not losing oneself in loneliness, regardless of whether it was gratifying or devastating. From the inward turn to the depths of one's own being and from the consciousness of opposition to the world, this world was to be created anew, and in it was to be poured the power that had been granted to the artist by the loneliness of the ego and by immersion into the secret of personal existence. This "Hail to the joyous light of the world" is the actual basic and leading principle of the new symphonic aesthetic. Mahler executes it in three mighty examples. In two—the Fifth and Seventh symphonies, it arrives at the goal. In the middle work, the "tragic" Sixth in A minor, it is defeated. These are the three instrumental processes of grappling for the "joyous light of the world."⁶ Mahler carries them out as richly and reaches as deeply as is possible for an artistic imagination that soars to truly grandiose visions. Whether he himself recognized the solutions that were found as definitive, and whether the purely instrumental symphony was to be taken as the last means of reaching knowledge can be learned by looking at the Eighth Symphony. Here the breakthrough to the "joyous light of the world" was finally so successful that world and ego were fused into one, and no contradiction remained unresolved. First, however, Mahler used the symphonic form as an expression of his most personal will and design, as an illustration of the opposition between ego and world. For this, the form that was given was the large instrumental symphony with its corresponding stylistic idiosyncrasies. In it the ego, newly awakened to awareness through lyric and song,

could expand to the world.

The Fifth Symphony is the first attempt at such a new arrangement of the world from the individual ego. It begins in C-sharp minor and is raised to D major. Mahler's key symbolism speaks as clearly here as in the Fourth Symphony with its change from the idyllic G major to the heavenly E major, or in the [179] Seventh Symphony and its rise from the six-five chord on B minor to the festive C major, and finally in the Ninth Symphony and its deepening from D major to a sublime D-flat major. The earlier idea of key unity, preserved by Mahler in the First, Third, Sixth, and Eighth Symphonies, loses its binding power against the expressive value of the key and its tonal character. The change of key corresponds to the contrasting forms of movements. A funeral march "in measured step, stern, like a procession" ("In gemessenem Schritt. Streng. Wie ein Kondukt") begins, and an Allegro Rondo full of cheerful agility closes. The way runs from pain to activity, from passive sorrow to the joy of creation. This can be easily recognized—without any programmatic assistance—from the musical and formal organization. The Funeral March that opens the Fifth Symphony cannot be compared to the opening movement of the Second Symphony. The contrast of the passionate C minor and the elegiac C-sharp minor already points to the difference between the two pieces. That "Totenfeier" was a tragically conceived piece, serious and weighty in formal and thematic outlines. The fundamental mood of the C-sharp-minor Funeral March is of pain and lamenting. It is, in opposition to the active battle piece of the Second Symphony, a passive piece of suffering, resigned to sorrow and without the will for rebellion. The lingering effect of the *Kindertotenlieder* is perceptible, even without the melodic suggestions that appear later on. The trumpet begins alone:



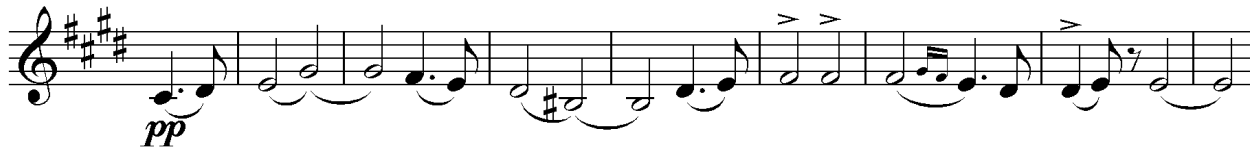
[Example 5-4: trumpet, mm. 1-14 with upbeat; horns and orchestral entry, mm. 12-14]

Only with the ascent to A does the orchestra enter with its full weight. Led by the trumpets, it remains at full force until the G-sharp-minor cadence, out of which the dotted motive tumbles to the depths in expanding leaps:



[Example 5-5: horns, mm. 24-28]

Here it slowly dies away under the echo of a triplet rhythm in timpani rolls on G-sharp. An exposition of mighty dynamic and rhythmic intensity of force. The brass instruments lead, and the string accompaniment contributes only a dark background canvas. Only after the great and mournful fanfare fades away does the string orchestra come in as an independent and opposing ensemble with a dynamically static, songlike, lamenting melody, without strong motion, singing resignedly, stepping forward in an unchanging, steady march tempo:⁷

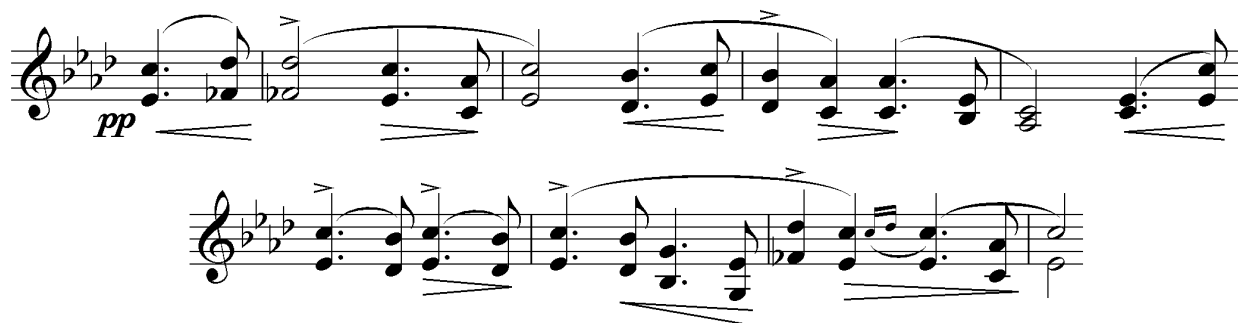


[Example 5-6: first violins, mm. 34-42]

In character, the melody is similar to that of the funeral-march canon from the First Symphony. Here as there it is a suffocated pain, without words or cries, which is moving precisely because of the absence of every affect. A second statement of the fanfare, this time supported from the outset by strictly rhythmic harmonies from strings, woodwinds, and horns, more powerful and reaching out more pointedly than before. A second statement also of the lamenting song from the string choir, more richly enlivened in voice leading, intensifying through two-part woodwinds and cellos:

[Example 5-7: flutes, oboes, clarinets, cellos, mm. 104-113]

[180] Coming on the heels of the gently soaring turn to major is a comforting song, *pianissimo*, from the woodwind choir in major.



[Example 5-8: flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, mm. 120-128]

The strings spin it out from A-flat to C-sharp major, giving it for a moment the expression of transfiguration, freed from pain:



[Example 5-9: violins, mm. 132-141]

The major mode is only transitional. The song disappears in the depths on a quiet timpani roll, and the beginning call of the trumpet rings after it like a distant echo. A new theme, “Suddenly faster, passionate, wild” (“Plötzlich schneller, leidenschaftlich, wild”). The trumpets, instead of completing the opening fanfare, plow into another violently excited realm of feelings. The low winds: tuba, bassoons, and contrabassoon, along with string basses, intone a bell-like *ostinato* bass motive, and trombones accompany in wave-like syncopated harmonies:



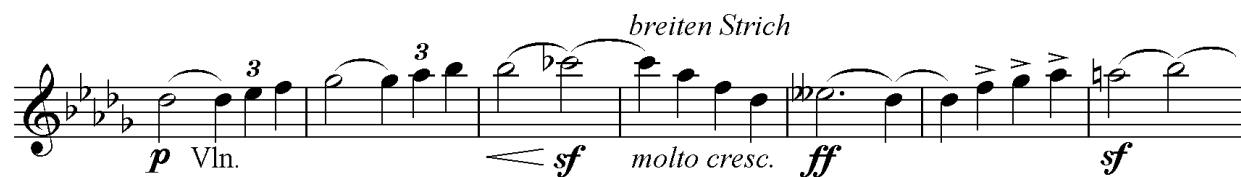
[Example 5-10: trumpet, mm. 155-161; cellos and basses, mm. 155-160; tuba, m. 161]

All of the passion of pain, which until now has been forcefully held back, breaks through without inhibition. A double triplet motive in trumpets and violins pulls the development further into wild motion:



[Example 5-11: trumpet and first violins, mm. 165-168]

Like a distress call, the opening triplet of the trumpets enters into the wave of sound, incapable of asserting itself, itself pulled into the ever more violently roaring whirlwind. The short G-flat-major turn of the violins also provides no stopping point:



[Example 5-12: violins, mm. 203-209]

After the uttermost release of power, a shrill call of muted trumpets:



[Example 5-13: trumpets, mm. 229-233]

creates a “gradually calming” (“allmählich sich beruhigend”) mood, as if this sudden flaring blaze had been only a dream.⁸ The opening fanfare sounds as before, the building lines now leading still more steeply upward in the trumpets. “Heavy” (“Schwer”), the sorrowful song begins, this time given to woodwinds, burdened with accompanying harmonies in the brass. The strings are silent at first. Only one muted cello voice sounds, longingly climbing upward, isolated within the massive weight of the winds and the muffled, step-marking percussion.⁹ Only at the turn to D-flat major are soft string colors again mixed in. At first in the low voices, then, sliding up to D major, suddenly “singing” (“singend”) in the upper registers, as if from another world. In the dialogue of flute, clarinet, and violins, the promise motive of the “Freudenlicht der Welt” from the first *Kindertotenlied* sings out:

[Example 5-14: flutes, clarinets, first violins, mm. 306-313; oboe, mm. 311-313; flutes and bassoons, mm. 314-316]

The painfulness and the mournful mood seem as if they have been wiped away. The triplet

motive [181] sounds softly from the timpani and leads to a new idea of sublimely expressive character. It proceeds in serious A-minor tones from the violins, a comforting song of solemn power, in which quiet sounds of pain only enter from the accompanying voices of cellos and violas:



[Example 5-15: first violins, violas, mm. 322-328]¹⁰

Its full meaning can only unfold in the larger frame of the following movement. Here, among the mournful moods, it soon obtains a passionate expression, refers back to the “wild” middle episode of the trumpets, and leads into a “lamenting” (“klagend”) chromatic descent over a wide-ranging pedal point on E. With an austere swelling of sound, all voices sink downward, horns and trumpets muted or stopped and with their “bells up” (“Schalltrichter auf”). Even the basses, which firmly hold the pedal point E at the beginning, gradually trickle down, crumbling, into the depths.¹¹ The trumpet fanfare starts one more time, but does not reach its end. The sounds falter, “verlöschend” (“extinguishing”), and fall away powerless from step to step. Muffled wind harmonies enter “heavily” (“schwer”). Pulled under without restraint, the thematic line falls from tone to tone until it disappears in the dark harmonies of the grave. As if it were lost and blown by the wind, the triplet call lingers afterward. Distant trumpet sounds give it again, and the tone of a flute, floating up to the ether, carries it off like a soul soaring to the heights. There remains a muffled drum roll, and with the deep *pizzicato* C-sharp from the strings, the last grain of sand falls.

Despite the external relationship in character to the first movement of the Second Symphony, this unusual piece stands isolated within the Mahlerian symphonic output. Considered alone, it is a properly worked-out march supplied with a double trio, and has in addition a movingly serious, self-contained mood and unity of design, but it does not have enough weight in itself to be effective as an independent opening movement. This is no reproach and no disparagement. Mahler obviously did not think of the piece as independent. He gave the symphony two opening movements, as it were: the C-sharp-minor Funeral March and the immediately following “Stürmisch bewegt. Mit größter Vehemenz” (“With tempestuous motion and greatest vehemence”) in A minor. The two belong to each other. They are linked thematically through the return of the mournful song in major within the A-minor movement and also through the anticipation of the side theme in A minor within the Funeral March. Considering formal significance and intellectual weight, the A-minor piece clearly and significantly dominates the Funeral March.¹² It is not only constructed with larger outlines and built like other opening movements in a richly organized sonata design.¹³ It is one of Mahler’s greatest conceptions of all, a piece with such eruptive, passionate force and internal intensification that it must be counted among the most powerful achievements of symphonic art.¹⁴ Here a reference to the principal key is also essential. A minor has an extraordinary meaning for Mahler. All of his A-minor movements count among his most unusual creations. They are not many: the first movement, Scherzo, and Finale of the Sixth, the “Trinklied vom [182] Jammer der Erde,” and the strange burlesque Rondo of the Ninth Symphony, which beyond tonality also displays a thematic and rhythmic relationship to the A-minor movement of the Fifth. In each case a special meaning of the A-minor tonality for Mahler is apparent. There

is something fateful in it for him, and it gives him an impetus and a boldness that enables him to make extreme pronouncements while still remaining lord of his passions. It is his key of confession, and it leads him into the deepest darkness and up to the steepest heights of his being.¹⁵

The opening is already surprising for its curious thematic structure. The movement has no principal theme in the usual sense. A sort of exclamatory motive stands in its place, very concise and restrained at first: five bass notes, wildly and passionately uttered, almost slung out, rough, commanding, irascible, cut off by a hissing blast of harmony from the orchestra, then reiterated, driving violently forward in more and more precipitous intensification:



[Example 5-16: cellos, basses, bassoons, trumpets, violins, mm. 1-2 with upbeat]

Whipping motives of pain, known from the Funeral March, are joined to this:



[Example 5-17: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 6-9]¹⁶

Thematic appearances break out, running over each other as if in a wild passion. First of all is the continuation of the pain motive in the violins, violently convulsing, and then rushing forth in hammering eighth-note rhythms, supplemented by upward-storming contrary motion in the

string basses:



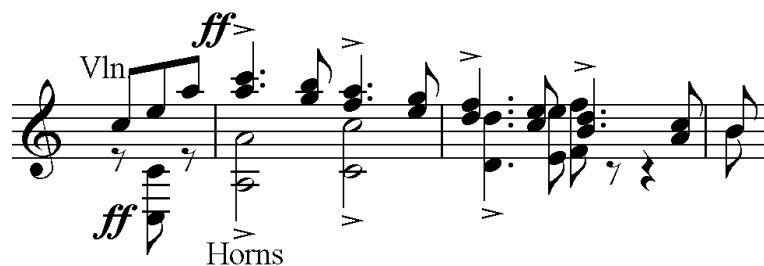
[Example 5-18: violins, cellos, basses, mm. 8-12]

Added to this are ascending scalar harmonic progressions in the trombones over a firmly anchored A. They had already appeared with augmented rhythm in the opening measures and they now return, increasingly crowded together like an iron clamp that closes more and more tightly:



[Example 5-19: trombones, mm. 5-15]

Horns storm on while violins, in sharply rhythmic thirds, press downward against them:



[Example 5-20: horns, first and second violins, mm. 15-18]

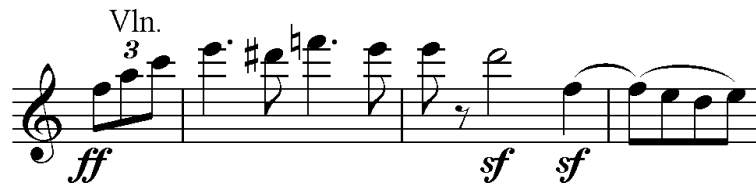
lamenting poignancy of the notes to come forward with greater intensity:

[Example 5-21: first violins, mm. 32-38; basses, mm. 30-33; second violins, violas, mm. 35-38]

resistance is never contemplated. Now it sweeps up in howling *legato* phrases:

[Example 5-22: second violins, mm. 38-42]

And now it thrusts in forceful rhythms:



[Example 5-23: first violins, mm. 41-44]

Between these sound new battle cries from the trumpets and horns:



[Example 5-24: trumpets, mm. 43-46; horns, mm. 43-44]

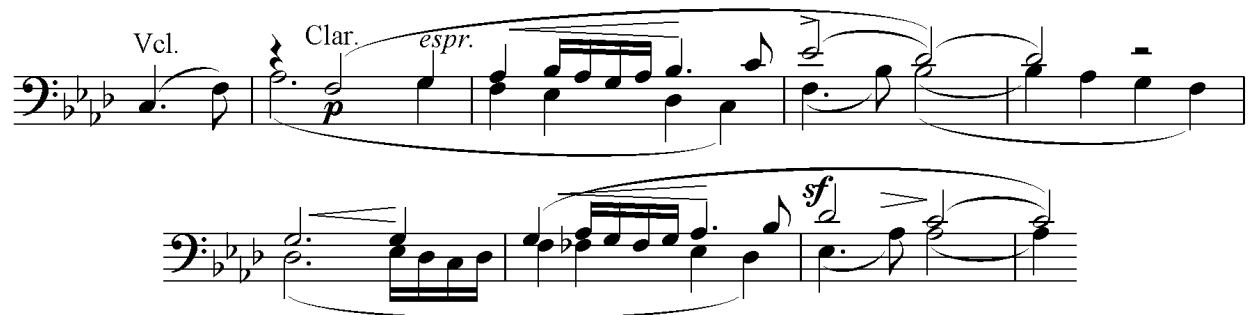
They do not yet penetrate through. A nearly indescribable acoustic buildup combines the opening theme, now given to six horns, and the second A-minor theme in the tempest of the upper voices, while the basses plunge chromatically downward and the chord motive of the trombones hammers on the weak beats of the measures for the sake of the buildup. The hurricane presses toward its climax, but then, like a suddenly receding force of nature, dissipates almost with a single blow. In a few measures the *legato* runs of the woodwinds tumble to the depths.¹⁷ A long, quietly fading timpani roll on C is the only thing that remains from the A-minor bluster. The key changes to F minor. “Significantly slower, in the tempo of the Funeral March” (“Bedeutend langsamer, im Tempo des Trauermarsches”), under softly quivering accompanying rhythms from the flutes, the pain motive is heard again, now lamenting woefully,

called out from the clarinets to the flutes, and from them to the horns and bassoon. Under this accompaniment, which is further spun out, arises a solemn cello song, “*molto cantando*,” a melody of noble grandeur, with measured stride and full of somber, but restrained expression. It is a sibling to the elegiac A-minor melody from the Funeral March. It corresponds to that melody exactly in the accompaniment, and while the melodic direction is certainly altered, its basic line is of unmistakably similar sweep:¹⁸



[Example 5-25: cellos, mm. 78-86; basses, mm. 79-82]

The cellos begin three times with the dramatic ascent C–F–A-flat. On the third time, a deep clarinet counterpoint is added, and the two voices lead toward the major:



[Example 5-26: clarinets and cellos, with some viola notes, mm. 86-94]

Gradually the melody rises from the deeper sound regions up to the violins. “Tenderly” (“Zart”), an urgently ascending upper voice spreads forth, and the horns take over the F-minor theme with solemn expression. “Widely bowed” (“breit gestrichen”), the violins turn it to D-flat major:



[Example 5-27: first violins, mm. 116-119]¹⁹

The more confident mood is further consolidated, [184] until the woodwinds slip “without expression” (“ohne Ausdruck”) back toward F minor:

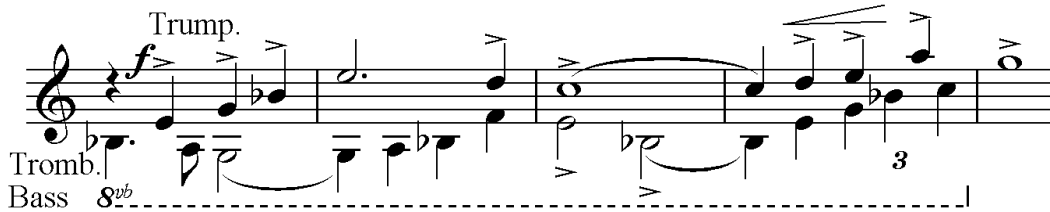
[Example 5-28: cellos, mm. 127-135; flutes, mm. 124-127; horns, mm. 134-135]

The F-minor melody announces itself in the horns, but suddenly the motives of the A-minor music break forth with elemental force and chase away the F-minor lyricism, taking over the field themselves.²⁰ Their once unfettered power, however, now has something violent and convulsive about it. The bass motive, which previously released the storm without any sort of resistance, must make multiple starts this time, on A and on G. Both times, it does not manage to reach beyond the initial onset. Instead, a new idea steps forward. It is actually not completely new, for it was heard earlier as a battle cry from the trumpets in the middle of the storm from the remaining voices, but was unable to gain a hold or push itself through. It is now taken up initially by violins and woodwinds:



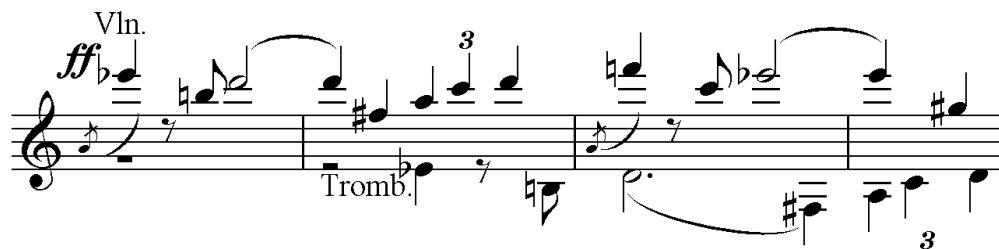
[Example 5-29: oboes, clarinets, violins, mm. 149-152]

Then the basses are affected by it, and trumpets play it in augmentation:



[Example 5-30: trumpet, cellos, basses, bassoons (final version has no trombones here), mm. 157-161]

The rhythmic, triumphal idea penetrates ever more strongly as violins and woodwinds play it in close imitation with trombones:



[Example 5-31: first and second violins, trombones, mm. 171-174]²¹

The pain motive rears up one more time over a B-flat pedal point, and then the eighth notes of the first theme flit away. The passionate A-minor has not been able to push itself through. It was no longer capable of spreading out in its original wildness. But the comforting F-minor visitation is also driven away, and only the enigmatic, oppressive stillness of a timpani roll remains.²² There follows one of the most ingenious inspirations of Mahler the musician. Over

the hollow drum roll, a deeply sighing cello tone stirs “hesitantly” (“zögernd”), then falls back into silence, starts once again more urgently and “lamenting” (“klagend”), is silent again, then begins a third time, always reaching higher and more longingly—like the will toward a melody, a call to the vanished F-minor song. Other voices quietly find their way in. The viola lays in harmony under the cello recitative, the timpani quietly rolls onward, and dark clarinet thirds sound:

Example 5-32 is a musical score snippet featuring four staves. The top staff is for Violoncello (Vcl.) in bass clef, with markings: *tr*, *p*, *zögernd*, *kurz*, *simile*, *klagend*, and *sempre pp*. The second staff is for Timpani (Tmp.) in bass clef, with markings: *pp* and *tr*. The third staff is for Clarinet (Clar.) in bass clef, with markings: *sempre pp* and *poco cresc.*. The bottom staff is for Horns in bass clef, with marking: *pp*. The Vcl. staff also has *ma espressivo* and *Violas* markings.

[Example 5-32: cellos, mm. 188-213; timpani, mm. 187-188; violas, mm. 204-209; clarinets, mm. 210-212; horn, m. 213]

“Gently coming forward” (“Zart hervortretend”), the melody appears in the horns, now in solemn E-flat minor, soothing and enlightening despite minor-key darkness and deep melancholy, calmly and steadily spreading forth. Now the triumphal motive also attains an exalted prestige. [185] Stopped horns announce it:

Example 5-33 is a musical score snippet for Horns gestopft. The staff is in treble clef and has markings: *mf* and *f*.

[Example 5-33: muted horns, mm. 232-234]

A new large buildup is being prepared. “From here on do not drag any more” (“Von hier an nicht mehr schleppen”) writes Mahler. While the triumph rhythm marches further in the winds, the eighth-note motive of the beginning begins to unwind in the basses. In the other strings, the stormy assertiveness of the A-minor music also gathers itself together once again with a chromatic onrush, and it suddenly breaks out in E-flat minor—only violins, violas, woodwinds, and horns in their sharpest register:



[Example 5-34: flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, trumpets, violins, violas, mm. 252-253]

But the breakout does not achieve its end. The key suddenly turns to C-flat major, the basses march upward in a strong *fortissimo*, and the triumph motive shines out from the violins:



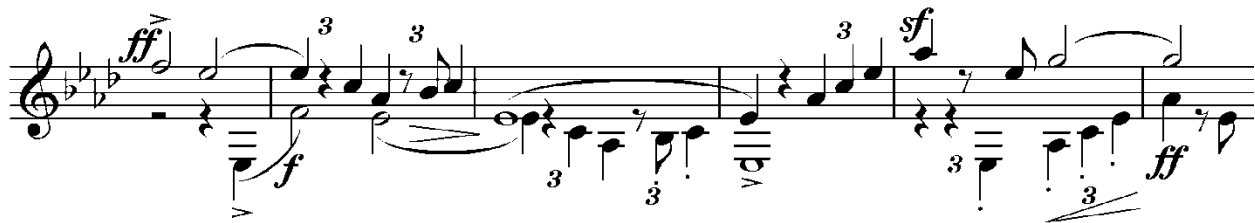
[Example 5-35: cellos, basses, then first violins, mm. 254-256]

It is only for a moment, and then the E-flat-minor color again attains precedence. The storm motives thrust forth once again. A new vision scares them off. “Suddenly significantly slower again” (“Plötzlich wieder bedeutend langsamer”) the major-key song of the Funeral March rings out, now transposed to B major and tied to the basic rhythmic motive of the triumph theme:



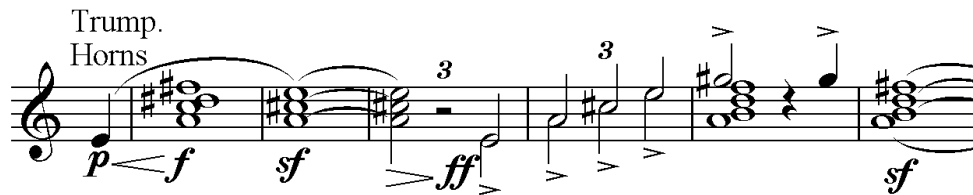
[Example 5-36: flutes, oboes, clarinets, violins, mm. 266-269]

Supported by this memory of the earliest comfort, and strengthened through the steady power of the triumph motive, the great ascent begins. Più mosso subito, in two-voice imitation—woodwinds leading and cellos following after them—a new triumphal idea commences:



[Example 5-37: oboes, clarinets, cellos, mm. 288-293]

“Unnoticeably pressing” (“Unmerklich drängend”), the voices, gaining strength, push themselves more closely and harshly into each other. “Suddenly sustained” (“Plötzlich anhaltend”), an intense flare-up in A major: the new triumph motive solemnly swells in trumpets and horns, with a sharply dissonant harmonic distortion of the climactic note:



[Example 5-38: trumpets, horns, mm. 315-321]

Out of this, Tempo primo subito, the A-minor themes, seemingly suppressed, again break out

with intensified power and wildness.²³ The introduction, more unrestrained than at the beginning in its chaotic expression, closes this time with a dominant chord on B major. Now in E minor, the wildly surging chords again begin, seeming again to introduce their powerfully passionate theme. But the line turns away after two measures. Instead of the expected continuation, the secondary theme follows in E minor, “somewhat slower” (“etwas langsamer”) in tempo, but in the character of its presentation and of the billowing accompaniment, it is drawn into the storming of the A-minor music:



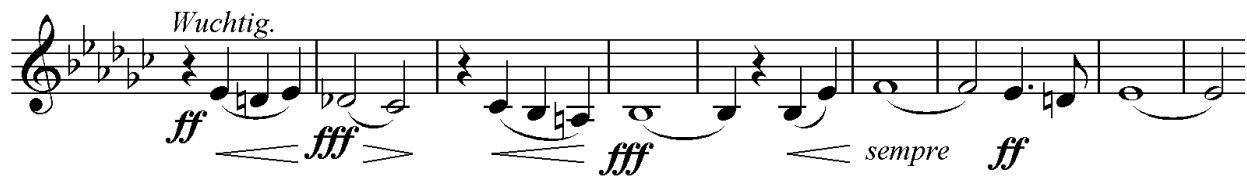
[Example 5-39: violins, mm. 355-365]

“On the G-string, with much changing of the bow” (“G-Saite, viel Bogen wechseln”), is the prescription. Fullness and passion of sound is the main requirement. As the secondary theme itself grows together with the original, restlessly moving A-minor theme, so does its [186] initial elegiac portion also obtain, through the new sound and rhythm, a character of strongly urgent activity. The earlier opposites are blended.²⁴ The melodic swing and the noble singing line of the second theme are penetrated by the rhythmic and dynamic tension of the first. It builds to the utmost passion in unison of all the woodwinds and horns, laid upon the broad A minor of trombones and tuba:



[Example 5-40: oboes, clarinets, horns, mm. 388-391]

The motives of the minor group return again in a fleeting, excited tempo with the strongest expressive agitation. It is an internal impetus, an expectation of a verdict, growing to an almost breathtaking tension, such that Mahler continually and warningly commands in the score: “do not hurry” (“nicht eilen”), “restrained” (“gehalten”), and again “do not hurry.” The intensification lies in the cyclically sharpening point of expression, and its ultimate effect must not be endangered by a too early rushing of the tempo. The wave rises from E minor to F minor, and falls from there “heavily” (“wuchtig”) back into E-flat minor. The storm song sounds out with demonic power:



[Example 5-41: violins, violas, cellos, mm. 429-437]

The violins are “always on the G string” (“immer auf G”), the basses “wild,” the winds with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter auf”), and the whole is “somewhat urgent” (“etwas drängend”) in presentation, inexhaustible, restless, as if driven by the lash. And now, driven to *furioso*, stretched to the last and utmost powers, the violins strings “torn” (“gerissen”), a frenzied outbreak of defiance, despair, and destructive will:



[Example 5-42: cellos and basses, mm. 443-445; first violins and violas, mm. 444-447; second violins and violas, mm. 447-449]

Now “*pesante*, suddenly restrained” (“*Pesante, etwas anhaltend*”), a softly shimmering, swelling ray of light, and then a gleaming A from trumpets and trombones. It arises in a mighty octave sweep to a D-major chord, to a chorale. After the excessively agitated and unbridled confusion of voices and harmonies, after the chaotic disunity comes suddenly this solemn call to attention, this simple but overpowering and radiant promise. Trumpets and trombones have the lead, and the woodwinds, at first silent, join with them, while strings and harps sweep around the mighty sounds with jubilantly storming runs. So sounds the annunciation into the storm:

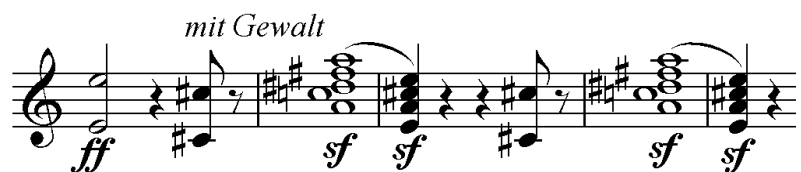
[Example 5-43: brass with some other notes from winds and strings, mm. 463-488]

Here the hymn is interrupted, or more accurately it quiets of itself. The weight of the momentum is too strong, and it nearly bursts all capability of expression. Yet the last and highest word is still to be said, and the full, all-encompassing force must be attained. Meanwhile the orchestra rejoices as if it had received tidings of the Resurrection. The trumpets press forward *accelerando* as if in an anticipation that cannot be harnessed: [187]



[Example 5-44: trumpets, mm. 488-491]

“With power” (“Mit Gewalt”) the horns and trumpets call to the heights:



[Example 5-45: horns and trumpets with harmonies from trombones and others, mm. 491-495]

Everything drives toward the extreme as violins storm, harp *glissandi* rush, and percussion rolls.

A pause for breath. Now the closing verse rings out. With tremendous luminosity, the third of the chord, F-sharp, enters. All the brilliance is guided to this one “climax” (“Höhepunkt”):



[Example 5-46: brass, mm. 500-510; horns with rising bass notes, mm. 510-519]

What is it that has happened? Something that seldom occurs, not even in the life of a great artist, for it remains even for him a gift of the most hallowed hours: the revelation of

something extraordinary, something deeply overwhelming, both artistically and humanly. A vision of heaven, won through an incredible stretching of all powers, through a fanatical whipping up of pain to an oblivious wildness, through an unyielding struggle with the angel, a struggle that does not let up before the word of blessing rings out. After this A-minor movement, Mahler created yet more pieces stamped with such greatness, with mighty buildups and with radiant climaxes. Particularly in the Eighth, he showed once again a power of stretching the mind and the will that seems to go beyond the possible and nearly takes the breath away from the listener. In spite of this, the A-minor movement of the Fifth stands alone within the complete Mahlerian oeuvre. Such a summation of darkly agitated passion and the sweep of grandiose glory through internally rich and animated organization of the structure, constantly changing and yet directed in every particular toward the ultimate goal, the parts seamlessly joined to each other, the language flowing without any interruption—only this one time was Mahler able to accomplish all of that at one go, as he only attempted it in such a manner this one time. Not least to be valued is the art involved, after a long-spun movement that constantly pushes the utmost dynamic and sonic boundaries, in making such intensification still possible. It was only achievable through an adjustment in the grouping of the orchestra, whereby the most agile instruments—woodwinds and strings—dominate directly before the entrance of the chorale, while from the chorale on the brass group steps forward in its united splendor.²⁵

One can point out the model of Bruckner in relation to the chorale apotheosis. Doubtlessly, there are influences of Bruckner on Mahler that speak here. On the other hand, as soon as one compares Mahler's introduction of the chorale with Bruckner's use of the chorale in his Fifth Symphony, the inner differences of the two musicians are recognizable. For Bruckner,

the chorale remains a grandiose and impressive, but mainly a sonically and dynamically perceived final buildup. For Mahler, the sonic and dynamic, as meaningfully as it is emphasized, is still only a means. It stands in the service of the complete idea of the work. This chorale is not only the crowning moment of the first part. It is not only the answer to the Funeral March of the first movement and to the unfettered storm of passion in the second [188] movement. It is also in no way, as perhaps in the Resurrection message of the Second Symphony, to be taken as a revelation from above. It is the announcement of an individual, proud, unbending strength. It is not won as a gift of grace from an unknown power. It grows up out of even those depths which are rooted in extreme pain and passions. Everything that is sanctimonious in the more narrow sense of religiosity is absent. This chorale is the song in praise of the will, and it is the chorale of life. As such it raises itself above the laments and storms of both movements to which it provides a conclusion. But this conclusion is not the last. Here the chorale appeared as the outcome of a seeming development, averting destruction. Soon it will become still more. It can not only bring light and create an upward vision, but it can also awaken activity and joy. Its essence is not bound to the solemn chorale rhythm or to the pomp of harmonies that move in whole measures. It can also inwardly live and run in the free, playful sequence of notes. It will only prove its fertility and its deep, inexhaustible life force when it is transformed into the defining theme of the cheerful dance of life and of the creative game in the closing Rondo.

Here it is only a preliminary announcement that closes the first part of the work, but not in the literal sense. When the light of this chorale sun softly burns out, a short epilogue enters like a play of shadows. The thematic appearances of the past arise once more, hesitantly at first, but quickly finding strength again, once more attempting the old game. It throbs like the sound

of a midnight bell that scares away the ghosts. The sonic construction of this conclusion, with a fantastic character reminiscent of Berlioz, could inspire such an interpretation.²⁶ The eighth-note motive flits away, muted to *pianissimo*, in the string basses. Short, disjointed after-beat chords flutter lightly in the woodwinds and harp, while violin and viola sounds buzz in spectral harmonics. The timpanist, continuing the descending *pizzicato* line of the string basses, provides a muted concluding stroke.

This is only a postlude. “A long pause follows” (“Folgt lange Pause”), according to the score. The promise stands firm, for the will has found and recognized itself. Now it only needs the strength to allow it to become action.

This strength is brought by the second part. It consists of only one movement, the Scherzo. The demarcation and the special position give an idea of the significance that Mahler ascribed to the piece.²⁷ It is Mahler’s first scherzo in the classical sense of a dance piece, and at the same time the last, for this type does not return again in the later symphonies.²⁸ Mahler thus only used it a single time, but in such a manner that with that single time all the possibilities of development in the type were exhausted for him. It is a piece that is as gigantic in external scale—it has more than 800 measures, and thus belongs to Mahler’s most extensive symphonic movements according to measure count—as it is moved by an overflowing fullness of ideas.²⁹ Its mere existence as a phenomenon, completely apart from the character of the content, already signifies a hymn to strength and to the [189] untiring freshness of the unrestrained spirit of life.³⁰ It is certainly not humorous in the older sense. Humor—pure, human humor—is totally distant from Mahler. Parody, sarcasm, and irony are familiar to him. It may come from this that his

scherezos always show an ambivalent character. From the sensory power of the peasant dance in the First Symphony, through the sermon to the fishes in the Second, the romantically echoing cuckoo song of the Third, and the death dance of the Fourth, to the elementally grotesque scherzo movements of the Sixth and Ninth and the spooky piece of sorcery in the Seventh—overall there are demonic forces at work. The dance costume is only a mask, behind which a humor hides that is often malicious, often bitter, seldom and only in quickly fleeting moments unintentional. The Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony also owes its emergence to no humorous impulses. It is a song in praise of the joy of being, of a lively, stamping, muscle-defying desire for sensual events and for the mere facts of life, growth, and the inexhaustible fullness of strength in procreation and existence. It draws from this joy the impulses of form, thematic content, organization, and construction. Psychological contrasts, doubt, and anxiety remain distant, finding no ground. It is perhaps the most straightforward movement that Mahler composed, internally resting upon the mighty impetus of the preceding section, and upon the health and dynamic joy of the new will to life that has bloomed up out of the grave of the past and out of the battle of passions.³¹

There is no introduction. A powerful horn call begins, proclaiming an impetuous and fundamental strength both in the boldly advancing opening rhythm and in the impudent forward-pressing scale of the second measure:



[Example 5-47: horns, mm. 1-3]

Four horns and a solo horn are employed. The four begin “forcefully, not too fast” (“kräftig, nicht zu schnell”) in unison with the mighty, resounding opening call, and the solo horn takes it up, swelling and connecting it to the melodic continuation. The theme has nothing dancelike, rather it sounds like a self-aware, joyful, forceful summons. The accompanying woodwinds first give dance character to the $\frac{3}{4}$ meter:

Example 5-48: solo horn, clarinets, bassoons, mm. 3-8

They round the horn call, which fades away on A, into a periodic, closed theme. Now follow the strings, as if the continuing sound of the horn has now fetched them as well, with a vigorously swaying, “cheeky” (“keck”) fiddle tune:

Example 5-49: solo horn, first violins, mm. 15-20

More and more voices find their way in. The first violin tune is soon followed by another one with weighty, revolving motion:



[Example 5-50: first violins, mm. 26-30]

Then, after a strong D-major conclusion, a new, stamping unison motive in the violas and cellos:



[Example 5-51: violas, mm. 39-42]

Clarinets and oboes, with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter in die Höhe”), join in. While the unity appears to be lost in secondary ideas that stumble after one another, [190] the harmony in augmented chords is strident and harsh:



[Example 5-52: clarinets, mm. 43-47]

The violins turn to minor with chromatic strains of the melody, and the voices run somewhat chaotically through each other. Then sounds the horn call and at once they are together again. A new, jolly theme strikes up with glockenspiel and violin *pizzicati* :



[Example 5-53: first violins, mm. 72-75]

Again the stamping motive of the strings presses to the fore, this time in B-flat major, and this is again closely followed by a confusion of voices. They isolate themselves into groups. But then the upward driving, syncopated woodwind theme brings the collective jubilation to an elemental breakthrough:



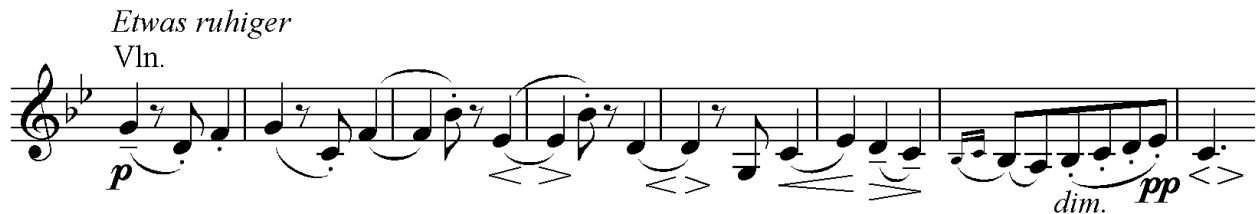
[Example 5-54: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 121-125]

Rolling violin runs escalate the momentum, while trumpets and horns pass the main theme to each other in alternation, and everything drives with increasing force toward the D-major conclusion. Then, slipping to B-flat, the theme suddenly sounds melodically distorted, troubled also by the added mixture of muted trumpets and horns, fading quickly from *fortissimo* to *pianissimo*, and just as suddenly growing again:



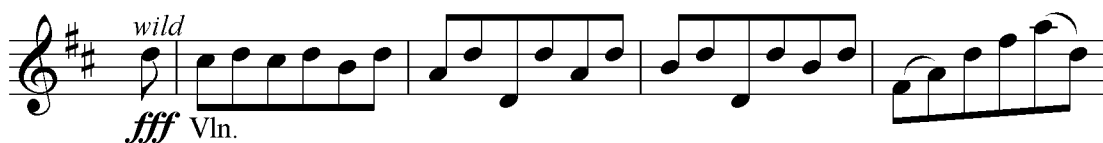
[Example 5-55: horns, mm. 131-135]

The mood makes a turn, but now out of the loud and joyful into the tender and secretive. D major changes to B-flat major, the metallic tone colors disappear, and strings alone have the word at first. A lightly bouncing dance tune sounds from the violins, violas and basses accompany with *pizzicato* beats, and cellos, only half of which take part, attempt an imitative counterpoint:



[Example 5-56: first violins, mm. 136-143]

With the entering oboe and flute a dance idyll is woven, concluding in lightly soaring flute notes. “Cheekily” (“Keck”), the trumpet interrupts the delicate play of notes with the opening call. The horn takes it up. Tempo primo develops anew in a short D-major round dance. “Wildly” (“Wild”), the violins start up with the stamping motive:



[Example 5-57: first violins, mm. 200-204]

This time it develops differently, more serious and threatening than before. In imitative sequence, violas, cellos, second violins, and finally string basses take up the motive, always beginning “wildly” (“wild”). An excited burlesque play of string voices chasing each other. Short motivic wind calls ring in and gradually push back the wild stamping motive. It then

changes into a wave-like, flowing *legato*, during which a melancholy minor-key tune sings from the horns, moving in wide reaching intervals:³²



[Example 5-58: horns, mm. 241-248]

The strength lets up, and the will loses its activity, giving itself over to dreamy meditation.

Woodwinds restate the melancholy tune, and the horns try in vain to intone the rousing opening call. [191] They no longer succeed with it, and it slides down:



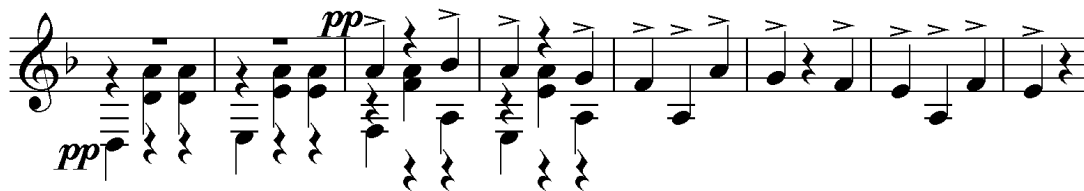
[Example 5-59: oboes, English horn, clarinets, horns, mm. 252-257]

As if searching, the four horns, “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter in die Höhe”), call out the held F directly after one another.³³ The solo horn takes up the call and leads it further *portamento* into the melancholy tune, like a fading signal waiting for an answer. Softly, from a great distance, a tenderly contrasting phrase is heard from the cellos:



[Example 5-60: cellos, with some viola and bass notes, mm. 281-285]

This game is repeated several times, now held back in tone and tempo, now enlivened and pressing forward. The horn closes the duet and steers over to a dance-like play of the strings with the melancholy tune. The melody is picked out in short *pizzicati*.³⁴



[Example 5-61: first and second violins, cellos, mm. 308-311, then first violins only, mm. 312-315]

“Timidly” (“Schüchtern”), the oboe attempts to interrupt the stifled mood through a reminiscence of the dance melody of the opening section:



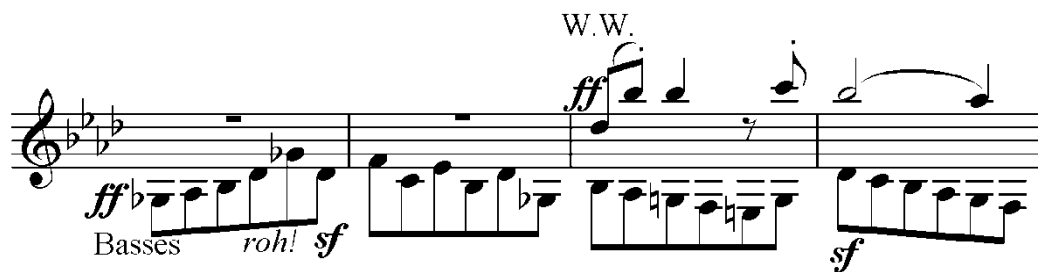
[Example 5-62: oboe, mm. 329-334]

But this breaks off right away, and the elegiac minor-key characters retain the lead for now. The melancholy tune broadens more and more, singing, and the trumpet obtains new melodic lines in a turn to E minor:



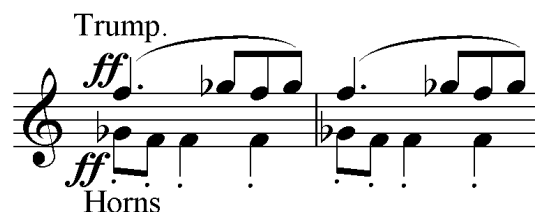
[Example 5-63: trumpet, mm. 389-396]

Only now, after additional resounding and fading of calls and responses, do the dance motives gradually attain strength again. The “timid” (“schüchtern”) melody of the oboe is taken up “sweepingly” (“schwungvoll”) by the violins, at first in F minor and with tender *pizzicato* accompaniment, then crossing decisively, with rapid intensification, into the sprightly liveliness of the Tempo primo. “Crude” (“Roh”) eighth-note runs in the basses are reminiscent of the “wild” stamping motive of the transition. Answering them, the dance motive, as if flung out with wanton force, resounds *fortissimo*:



[Example 5-64: cellos and basses, flutes, oboes, clarinets, first violins, mm. 456-459]

Ever more boisterous, the whirling dance intensifies to a near brutality of sound and of voices sharply rubbing against each other. A demonic power is unleashed. Under shrill woodwind trills on F and the sounds of F and G-flat bumping hard against each other in horns and trumpets:



[Example 5-65: trumpets and horns, mm. 462-463],

trombones, string basses, and bass woodwinds intone the dance motive of the first theme in B-flat minor, heightened to a fantastic wildness:



[Example 5-66: trombones, mm. 463-467]

The horns answer in unison with the shrill and jubilant second dance motive:



[Example 5-67: horns, mm. 469-470]

In an unrelenting buildup, the wild hunt drives forward.³⁵ After a sudden, breathless pause, the Scherzo opening begins once again, with similar thematic content as before, but substantially exceeding the former dynamic and sonic boundaries. Everything is richer, with a greater rush of color and expression, and the full weight of an [192] orchestra that is built up so much that it almost exceeds its own size, driven in every part to the utmost movement and endowed with greatest power, is consciously played as a trump card. The way in which Mahler deals here with trombones and timpani, with horns and trumpets—primarily the brass choir has the lead—draws an insight into his changes to Beethoven's instrumentation.³⁶ The trombones are led in unison with bassoons and string basses in lively eighth-note runs, the horns are doubled in thirds, while woodwinds, first and second violins, as well as violas run in unison. The C clarinet is made to give the two A clarinets an especially sharp tinge, and the timpani beat out tonic and dominant triads in powerful quarter notes. It is a sound world of incredible intensity of excitement, interrupted only by short calming episodes, and the whole is constantly swept away over broad

stretches in the same insatiable abundance. The tender B-flat-major episode from the first section is now transformed in triple *forte*, D major, with wailing contrapuntal lines from the horns:



[Example 5-68: violins and solo horn, mm. 563-566]

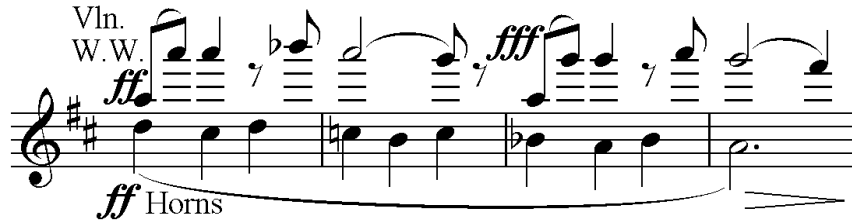
The “wildness” of the individual string voices ascends through development of the stamping motive to triple *forte*, “very violently” (“sehr heftig”), in the combined sound of all strings.

Thus, the expression is constantly enlarged by external force. New thematic intensification also forms. Such it is with the *furioso* conclusion of the D-major section, where all strings, according to the score direction “stroke for stroke” (“Strich für Strich”), hammer and press upward in a furious chromatic ascent:



[Example 5-69: first violins, mm. 685-691]

Once again the question-and-answer play of the melancholy tune, the song of loneliness. Then, “Tempo primo subito,” a last driving, volcanic uprising, a titanic exultation in a high-spirited pulling together of the melancholy tune with the wild dance motive:



[Example 5-70: violins, piccolo, flutes, oboes, clarinets, and horns, mm. 799-802]

All is driven to a chaotic, whirling joy in the play of forces, intoxicated and oblivious. Then a last spirited statement of the opening call in the horns, through which the whole world resounds, and a short conclusion that is quickly cut off.

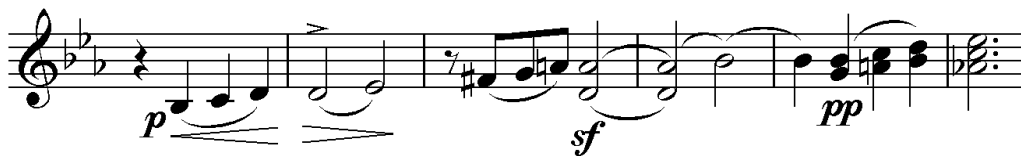
That is the second part. Strength for strength's sake, nothing less, nothing more. No sorrow, now lamenting, no despair. The melancholy tune is simply a momentary clouding of the unrestrained pleasure in one's own being, and of the joy in the consciousness of the will. Beyond that there is nothing, no gathering, no inner command, no goal. This is brought by the third part.

It consists of two movements, as did the first: Adagietto and Rondo-Finale. The Adagietto, as the name implies, is held to small dimensions and is actually, in a similar manner to the Funeral March, more an introduction to the following main movement of the part than an independent movement. Despite this brevity, it is not only meaningful in itself, but also notable for thematic links to the Finale as well as [193] for relationships to Mahler's songs. There are two of the Rückert compositions upon which the beginning of the Adagietto is strikingly reminiscent:



[Example 5-71: first violins, mm. 2-4]

First there is No. 2 of the *Kindertotenlieder*: “Nun seh ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen” (“Now I see truly, why such dark flames”). Here, the stepwise rising introductory motive, which continues to be prominent up until the close, reminds one of the Adagietto:



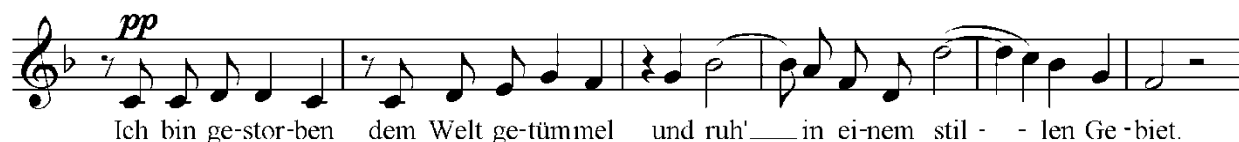
[Example 5-72: *Kindertotenlieder* No. 2, cellos (and violas), mm. 1-4; flutes and clarinets, mm. 5-6]

If this echo is more of a stylistic type, then another song shows deeper connections: “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen” (“I have become lost to the world”). Here also, the beginning is melodically similar to that of the Adagietto:



[Example 5-73: “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen”, vocal line, mm. 11-14, F-major version]

The emotional affect of the closing part of the song provides even more contact than this external echo:



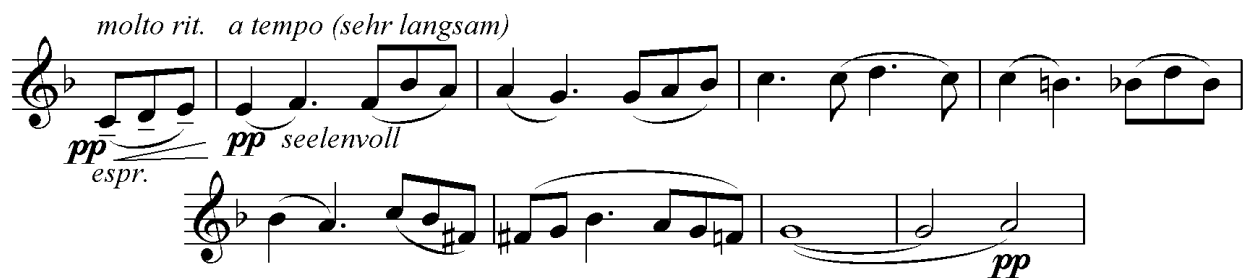
[Example 5-74: “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen”, vocal line, mm. 43-48, F-major version]

Key, harmony, and the character of the melodic formation show such unmistakable correspondences between the song and the Adagietto that the presence of inner relationships, the same whether they are conscious or unconscious, can hardly be placed into question.³⁷ This is not dependent upon assigning a meaning to the instrumental piece that is drawn from the song. There is here no transfer of a similar nature to the *Wunderhorn* songs that were completely dissolved into the instrumental piece. It is a similar manifestation to that which was already established in the first movement of this symphony: the adoption and further symphonic shaping of a characteristic melodic phrase that mirrors a certain lyrical mood that is closely identified through the song.

It does not require a reference to the expressive relationship with that beautiful, inwardly felt, purely melodically flowing song to affirm that this Adagietto is a dream of loneliness, obliviousness, loss of self in one’s own being, and a quiet, gratifying consciousness of growth from within the self. The Adagietto stands within the symphony like a tender elfish figure between giant, elemental spirits. Even the sound points to the complete opposite of all that goes before and follows. Only the string orchestra and harp are used. There is thus an absence of not only brass, but also woodwinds.³⁸ The dreamlike state is preserved uniformly in the sound from the first tenderly rising notes until the last waning tones in the low register. The simple and concise formal construction, in contrast to the other parts of this symphony, arises from the

modest sound medium that does not allow for much variety, as well as the placement of the movement within the work. The task of the Adagietto mediates between the apotheosis of strength for its own sake that was brought by the Scherzo and the bringing to fruition of this strength, which is reserved for the Finale. Between the two pieces, the Adagietto is interpolated for the sake of calming and collecting, for the sake of turning from the strong and externally directed glorification of the possession of strength alone toward its placement under the recognition of a higher striving will.³⁹

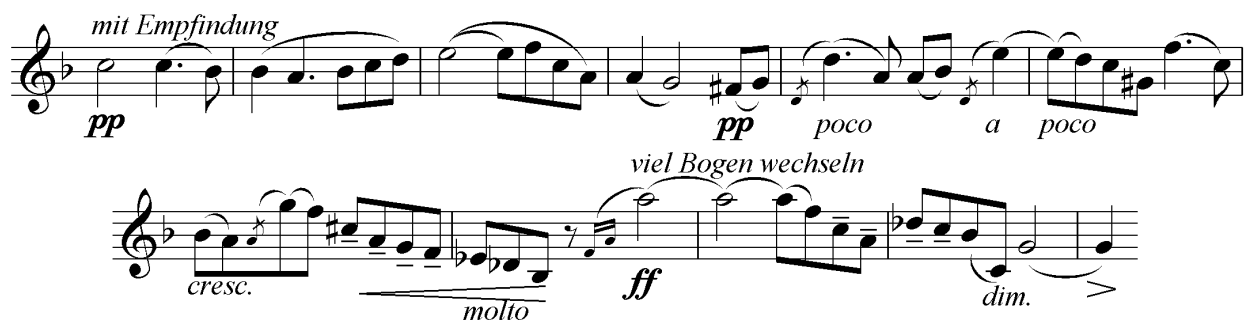
[194] The Adagietto is built along songlike lines. A first song begins in F major and a second follows in G-flat major, upon which the first returns as a conclusion. The piece begins like a string quartet movement with harp accompaniment. Violas, second violins, and cellos enter in a slow succession, adding to the harmony note for note. Last comes the melody of the first violins, supported by deep *pizzicato* from the string basses, “soulfully” (“seelenvoll”) singing:



[Example 5-75: first violins, mm. 2-10]

It is one of the most intimate melodies that Mahler composed. As with many of his inspirations for a symphonic theme, it is actually not artful or elegant enough, sung too plainly, too naturally. Or could it be conceivable that precisely this is an advantage to Mahler’s art, and that the ability to create such immediately and collectively understandable melodies is the identifying mark of

the great musician who turns to the wide-ranging circle of listeners at the symphonic podium? Are there elemental feelings and moods that cannot be expressed in any other way than simply and straightforwardly, and is it a sign of just this unusual strength and unmistakable compulsion when the symphonist dares trust himself to this simplicity? The cellos repeat the theme in rhythmic augmentation, and a somewhat more lively interlude in A minor leads back to the “äußerst langsam” (“extremely slow”) of the opening. Here follows the epilogue. “With feeling” (“Mit Empfindung”), it commences *pianissimo*, and leads with wide reaching melodic and harmonic buildup to a mighty upswing.⁴⁰ “Change the bow frequently” (“Viel Bogen wechseln”), Mahler writes for the sake of achieving a large sound:



[Example 5-76: first violins, mm. 23-33]

The second violins immediately take up the melodic thread and spin it further to the cadence:



[Example 5-77: second violins, mm. 33-38]

Until now F major has been held firmly as the basic tonality. The presentation, except for the one strong motion of upswing, has been kept extremely tender. Now the melody is enlivened

and the tempo becomes “more flowing” (“fliessender”). “With warmth” (“Mit Wärme”), taking up the motive of the interlude, the violins begin a new song with “great tone” (“großen Ton”) and with strong linear and modulatory motion:



[Example 5-78: first violins, mm. 38-46; violas, mm. 41-42]

With a sudden diversion of the buildup, it turns to G-flat major, here again forming a particularly tender melody: [195]



[Example 5-79: first violins, mm. 47-57]

The thematic force of this melody, striving upward, reaching down again from above, incessantly directing itself higher, is here only barely hinted. It first achieves its further unfolding in the Rondo-Finale, where, as a side theme, it provides inner vibrancy and a graceful supplement to the active impulse of the main themes. Now, after a brief buildup, a gentle reversal—soft

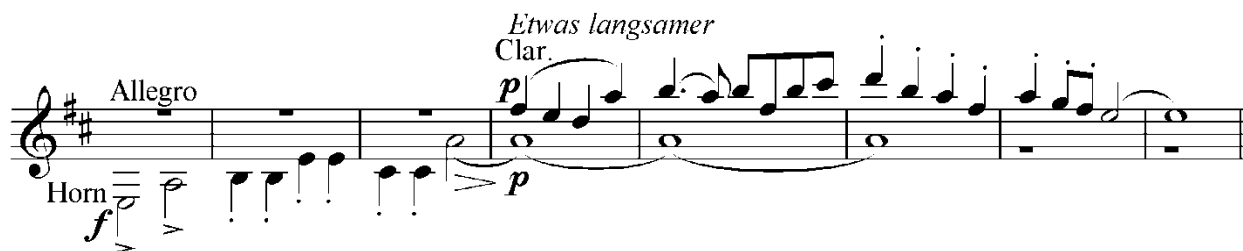
chromatic backslides in the basses and a melting *glissando* in the violins and violas—ushers in the opening melody again. The epilogue sings out once again, “*vibrato*, with most intimate feeling” (“*vibrato, mit innigster Empfindung*”). At the upturn are again “full bowing” (“*breiter Strich*”) and “much changing of the bow” (“*viel Bogen wechseln*”). The tone should flow from the violins with extreme eloquence. Then the sparkling harp chords fade away. The violins descend deeper and deeper, as if into a warm, soothing darkness. In stillness with neither desire nor pain, the soul has found its home and has come to itself. The will is silent, and strength is tamed. Everything that was still incapable of reaching the highest fruition, that was still striving and yearning, dies away in a long, lingering low F-major triad.

Now a resounding A from the horn, entering sharply, “dying away” (“*verklingend*”) in the distance. An echo tone from the first violins, an octave lower, likewise losing itself far away. Then a second, livelier call mixing tonic and dominant. From the bassoon, an eighth-note theme stumbles forward, and the oboe “hesitantly” (“*zögernd*”) adds a complement. Once again the bassoon answers. The Rondo-Finale has begun, and the new themes have announced themselves:

The musical score for Example 5-80 is written for Horn, Violin I, Bassoon, and Oboe. It begins with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The Horn part starts with a long, lingering note marked 'verklingend lang' and 'fp'. The Violin I part has a similar note marked 'verklingend' and 'pp'. The Bassoon part enters with a lively eighth-note theme marked 'Allegro' and 'f'. The Oboe part enters with a hesitant melody marked 'zögernd' and 'p'. The Bassoon answers the Oboe. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the initial entries of the instruments. The second system shows the continuation of the themes, with the Bassoon and Oboe playing together.

[Example 5-80: horn, first violins, bassoon, oboe, mm. 1-12]

And yet they are not so new. The “hesitant” (“zögernd”) oboe call, as well as the following bassoon answer, is already known from the second movement. They belong to the chorale, the hymn of life, and now appear without the solemn rhythm and the broad harmonic support in a simple melodic, motivic metamorphosis. For the third time the horn begins, more extensively and more confident than before. This time the answer, given by the clarinet, again with the chorale motives, also sounds more connected and flowing:



[Example 5-81: horn and clarinet, mm. 13-20]

A type of conversational continuation spins out. The oboe takes up the closing motive from the clarinet, and horns take it again from the oboe. In the accompanying voices of the clarinets, it hums [196] further as the horns, in “Allegro comodo (Hauptzeitmaß)” (“Allegro comodo [Main tempo]”), develop a sentimental, songlike tune:⁴¹



[Example 5-82: horns, mm. 24-31; flutes, oboes, clarinet, mm. 30-31]

The situation is similar to that in the Finale of Beethoven’s Ninth, where the instruments in

gradual combination begin the Joy melody. At first the winds—three-voice woodwind choir, two horns that soon increase to six, and finally trumpets—find their way to each other through the guideposts of this melody and lead it further in a songlike direction. Of the strings, only the cellos and basses take part, with all middle and upper voices silent. But it seems that this song is not the one that is actually sought. At the entry of the trumpets, a forceful, confident *forte* springs out of the tenderly moving dynamic of the wind choir:



[Example 5-83: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 51-53]

It is again the chorale, clothed in easily moving rhythms. Like a liberating magical spell, it calls the spirits to awake, gathers them, indicates the goal, and allows them to romp. The forces have arrived. A short, joyful, refrain-like conclusion with strong chords. Now begins a rondo development with great fullness, power, and originality of conception: the combination of the rondo type with a built-in double fugue and chorale. A similar idea of construction had underlain the second movement. Both times the chorale appears as a culmination. In the second movement, however, it is something new and contrasting, in meaning more of a future direction than an immediately active present. In the Rondo-Finale it likewise appears as a chorale only at the conclusion, but it is not foreign, rather expected and prepared. The themes that grow out of the preceding development are taken from it. They are its own flesh and blood, which have now become the applied work, principle, and strength of action. As such, it comes together again—after fully spreading itself out in a mighty upswing—in its hymn-like original form, and allows

the work to come to completion with it.

In such a manner Mahler here comprehends the idea of the old rondo. Although he now makes use of a form that until now he has not utilized, and although he uses it for the culmination of one of his most large-scale works, this is to be interpreted as neither a formal game nor somehow as a slackening of the intellectual capacity to use a form. On the contrary: the most extreme effort, the highest degree of self-reliance, and a deeply-rooted inner will to utilize the form were necessary to make such a solution possible, and to make it such a reality, as Mahler has done. The same is true of his use of the fugue. It likewise arises from the innermost necessity. Its contrapuntal artistry is fundamentally a secondary aspect. As assuredly as Mahler masters it, and as excellent as are the details of construction that he offers in this context, yet these are not aspects that identify his personality as such. It is primarily the architectural will to form that is significant. He creates for himself in this fugue and in this rondo construction the programmatic framework, as it were, for the realization of the creative urge that here strives toward the expression and the [197] representation of a new knowledge. This knowledge was not of a philosophical, not of a poetic or programmatic, but of a musical kind. Thus it created its symbol in the musical form. Form as the enforced representation and embodiment of an inner Becoming, a striving for shape, is again and again the problem of the Mahlerian creative output. This problem now finds a new solution where the old pattern is born again from the innermost will to life.

One can make a certain comparison of the Fugue-Rondo with the opening movement of the Third Symphony. There, the idea of Becoming and of the purely instinctive further planting from a seed was recognized as the fundamental creative idea of the form. Here it is the idea of

growing toward a deep, predetermined law, a fateful, assured fulfillment that proclaims itself in the creation of a great formal plan. There only the beginning was known, and the goal lay in the distant darkness. Here the goal is given and the will must pave the way unto it for itself. This creative will that here expresses itself in direct self-representation and shapes itself into the appearance of sound speaks as much from the individual themes themselves as from the construction of the whole. It is formed in a fugal development that returns three times with themes that are partly taken from the chorale of the second movement and partly from the G-flat-major portion of the Adagietto. Between the three fugal developments stand rondo passages. They likewise make thematic references back to the chorale and the Adagietto, directing the thoughts that were prompted there and developed with strict consistency in the fugue into further cheerful play. The chorale then places itself as the capstone in its original version, a confirmation and summation of the individual fugue elements, and the fulfillment of the promise that rang out in the A-minor movement.⁴²

This powerful finale is thus built in large subsections, as is also the execution of the details. There are here no theoretical, schematic points of reference. Everything runs in living lines, and the impetus, floating to the heights, can be felt all the way into the tenderest veins. Already the theme of the first fugue springs forth with strong energy and sprightly agility from the cellos:



[Example 5-84: cellos, mm. 55-62]

Unremittingly active strength, steadily striving will, also awareness firmly secure of itself and the calm certainty of the homogenous rhythmic motion, all speak from this theme. It forms the nucleus of the fugue and retains its activity until the end of the movement. Two contrapuntal countermelodies join in. The first, taken from the chorale, immediately enters as a countersubject to the fugue answer:



[Example 5-85: cellos and basses, mm. 63-66]

The second, laid on top, is also reminiscent of the chorale, but reconstructs it freely into a wind theme:



[Example 5-86: flutes and first violins, mm. 79-85]

To the string voices, which gradually come together in a regulated sequence, are joined flutes, clarinets, and bassoons with the second accompanying theme. [198] A sudden upswing brings the chorale-derived closing theme of the introduction in the woodwind choir, supplemented by horns:

Oboes
Clar.
f

Horns
Horn *sf*
f Basses *fp* *fp*

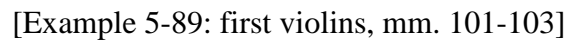
[Example 5-87: oboes and clarinets, mm. 88-94, 98-99; horns, bassoons, cellos, and basses, mm. 94-99]

All themes have in common the firmness and clarity of melody, the forceful, simple cut of rhythm, and the succinct procession, without contradiction, of expression. There is no reflection, no doubting, and no hesitating. In constant sequence, as if flowing from a higher law, the musical events roll by. Only after the unrestrained course of the first fugue is a light contrasting theme established. This is not as a contradiction, but only as a change of mood from the taut intensity of will in the fugue to a freely liberated, fantasy-like play of ideas. The fugue themes appear in a delicately bouncing reinterpretation:

Grazioso. Nicht eilen.
Vln. *p*
Vcl. *sf* *8^{va}*

[Example 5-88: first and second violins, cellos, mm. 99-101]

A songful expansion is added:



W.W. *espress.*

p Vln.

The musical score is written for two parts: W.W. (Woodwind) and Vln. (Violin). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The W.W. part is marked *espress.* and the Vln. part is marked *p*. The score consists of two staves. The W.W. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The Vln. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The W.W. part features a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a series of eighth notes. The Vln. part features a series of eighth notes, with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a series of eighth notes. The score is marked with a *p* (piano) dynamic.

Strings and woodwinds, both in the sonorous sounds of the middle register, compete in a beautiful and peacefully singing presentation. The characteristic opening tones, taken from the

chorale and sinking stepwise downward, sound through like a motto in the accompanying voices of the horns. The whole is directed toward a sound that fans out broadly, streaming with full tone, yet is outwardly held back. A noble symmetry of feeling reigns until the moment where, in the oboes and clarinets—with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter auf”)—the exhortation of the chorale energetically breaks through:



[Example 5-92: oboes and clarinets, mm. 158-162]

Now the second fugue rolls out, this time in B-flat major. The theme, striding in powerful calls and in sevenths that are sharply and commandingly cut off, is given to the four horns in unison:

Example 5-93 shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for 4 Horns, marked *ff* (fortissimo), in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat major). The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a final measure featuring a sixteenth-note triplet. The bottom staff is for String Bass, marked *mf non legato* (mezzo-forte, non legato), in bass clef with a key signature of two flats. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a final measure featuring a sixteenth-note triplet. The tempo/mood is marked *simile* (simile).

[Example 5-93: cellos and basses, mm. 167-170; horns, mm. 169-176]

This theme certainly does sound new, but its elements are actually not unknown. It is a transformation of the G-flat-major portion from the Adagietto, whose effusive [199] expression is changed into a strict firmness of will:



[Example 5-94: from Adagietto, first violins, mm. 53-54]

The reference to the Adagietto, at first perhaps seeming to be coincidental, is revealed to be doubtlessly intentional through the further course of the thematic line. This time it does not linger long in the fugal style. There is only one further thematic repetition, and this one is also not fugally set in the dominant, but rather jumps from B-flat to D major. Then a rondo-like *grazioso* immediately follows. Here for the first time the Adagietto idea, “tenderly, but expressively” (“zart aber ausdrucksvoll”), achieves its confirmation and development. Here it prevails. The trumpet once more sharply and energetically blares out the opening measures. Then violins, accompanied only by strings, coaxingly turn the melody in tender curves to B major:

[Example 5-95: horn (trumpet according to Bekker), mm. 187-189; first violins, mm. 190-201]

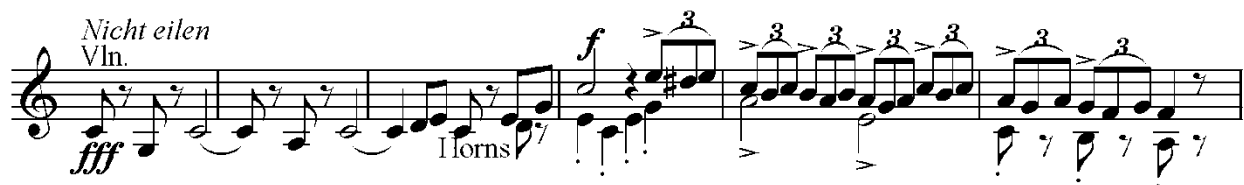
The Adagietto idea comes forward ever more distinctly. “Sweeping” (“Schwungvoll”) and rapturously, the melody rises up to the broad, exhaling B-major conclusion, to which the organ-like woodwind chords give a solemnly transfigured glow. The violins move down again in gentle harmonies. The theme, in its fugal version, pulses and presses from below, B major

changes into a more tangible G major, and the dream world is exchanged for reality. Gradually, the earlier fugue themes find their way to the new one, coming together in a joyful round. In a solid, earthy dance, a robustly striding two-step emerges from the violins against the chorale theme of the winds and the rushing eighth notes of the low strings:



[Example 5-96: oboes and clarinets, mm. 273-279; horns, mm. 277-279; first violins, mm. 272-275, 277-279; violas and cellos, m. 276]

The mood obtains something tremendously joyful, yet equally powerful. The resplendent and robust themes proceed without restraint, from D major over A major and falling into a coarse and rustic C major. They strive ceaselessly forward in the heavy steps of a peasant march:



[Example 5-97: first violins, mm. 307-312; horns, mm. 309-312]

The broad swing of the rondo melody rings in, and the strings hammer in unison:



[Example 5-98: flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns, second violins, violas, cellos, basses, mm. 318-321]

The stream drives ever onward in glorious, expansive strength from C major to B major, then over to D-flat major, then again to D major. It cannot do enough for itself in terms of good feeling and joyfully active will—and as the long echoing call of A from the horns brings an end to the outwardly directed enthusiasm, this only occurs in order to allow the Adagietto song to live anew in a rapturous D-major *grazioso*. Only after this second lyrical upswing has also faded away in the string orchestra, after it has sung itself out from its innermost capacity, does the theme derived from the Adagietto come into an active fugal development. [200] This is not, however, fugal in the pedantic sense, with an exact observance of the sequence of dux (subject) and comes (answer). Instead, stretto, imitation, contrary motion, and similar contrapuntal magic tricks are freely dished out. All of this is only for the sake of building the active drive, creative joy, and constant fertility of this theme to the extreme as well, until a mighty pedal point on A finally takes up the whole stream of themes and brings it to the greatest unfolding of strength. Strings and woodwinds intone the impetuous theme of the first fugue, six horns in unison with “bells up” (“Schalltrichter auf”) the commanding second theme of the Adagietto, and trumpets, sounding far above everything else and pointing to the last buildup that is still to come, the chorale theme:



[Example 5-99: trumpets, horns, second violins, violas, cellos, mm. 483-485]

The orchestra roars and rushes like an organ in the metallic splendor of the sound, with woodwinds and strings in opulent sixth chords, horns in full-measure tones of nature, while trumpets and trombones ring out broadly, as if it were possible to sound through the whole world. Yet the last summit has not yet been achieved, only a new point of arrival on the path to the free heights of the creative human will, up to which this symphony and this Finale lead in an untiring ascent. Once again the Rondo theme, now with a broad triplet sweep:



[Example 5-100: violas, mm. 497-498; second violins, m. 497; oboes, m. 498]⁴³

The chorale summit becomes more and more visible, and it flashes more distinctly than it has to this point in the trumpets:



[Example 5-101: trumpets, mm. 510-514]

The first fugue theme pounds and hammers again, and again it wanders and strives through the keys with its broadly bowed string unisons, its *staccato* woodwinds, and the echoing calls of fourths from the brass group, then gathers itself over an enormous and intense pedal point on G, appears to drive definitively toward the last, anticipated buildup that is always and repeatedly diverted, and sidesteps yet again, now to A-flat major. Once again the Rondo theme entices to delicate games and the Adagietto song entices to enraptured dreams. This time it does not remain restricted to the string orchestra alone as before. Woodwinds are mixed in, and the fugue themes make a rousing sound. It does not arrive again at a dream, but strives further, to action and to fulfillment. A tremendous excitement suddenly takes hold of all the voices, and the last, highest revelation stands immediately before and is anticipated. Wide intervals, solemn calls among one another, and an elemental swelling in all levels of strength lead toward that which can hardly be physically attained. Now the manifestation is finally revealed. The hymn to life rings out for the second time within the work, once a preliminary annunciation, now the final confirmation. A radiant gleam of unprecedented power breaks forth from the brass choir, while woodwinds and strings swirl and play around the song in rolling eighth notes with the first fugue theme, until at the climax, the last line of the chorale, this theme, as if far too worldly, sinks into the depths. The woodwinds become silent, and the strings now provide only rhythmic stimulation of the sound. The brass choir alone rises transfigured to the heights with a hymn to life that resounds as if into the universe.⁴⁴

[201] After the disappearance of the vision into the distance of heaven, there is again a spontaneous jubilation, overflowing joy, merriment and happiness without end. The will has triumphed, and life is newly won. The horn cheerfully changes the sound of the chorale

conclusion into an Allegro molto dance tune:

The image shows a musical score for the conclusion of the Fifth Symphony, specifically the section from measure 748 to 758. The score is written for four staves, each representing a different instrument: Horns, Basses, Trumpets, and Trombones. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegro molto'. The dynamics are marked 'ff' (fortissimo) for the Horns and Basses, and 'f' (forte) for the Trumpets and Trombones. The Horns and Basses play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the Trumpets and Trombones play a more melodic line. The score includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings. The overall mood is one of intense energy and forward motion.

[Example 5-102: oboes and clarinets, m. 748; violins (without pedal A's), mm. 748-762; horns, mm. 748-758; flutes, mm. 753-761; trumpets and trombones, mm. 759-762; cellos and basses, mm. 750-758]

There is an easy temptation to give this symphony a programmatic interpretation. The sorrow of the past in the first movement, the demonic passion of the second with its redeeming closing hymn, the unbridled profusion of strength in the Scherzo, the isolation from the world of the Adagietto, and the unceasing, forward striving joy in creation of the Finale with its crowning avowal of life—this all can be given a storyline without difficulty. As easy as it would be, no such extensive program could speak more clearly as the work does from itself. The symbolism of the formal musical language is developed here to a certainty of expressive feeling that makes every explanatory word superfluous. If one understands the Fifth Symphony from the symbolism of its formal language, it is not only recognizable why Mahler here, in contrast to the previous works, gave no poetic hints, nor did he grasp at the conveyance of his idea through the

sung word. One also recognizes the extraordinary progress in the development of the artist as well as the man Mahler in this turn to the instrumental symphony without a program. Only then could he succeed in wresting from the music the expressive values that his will urged him to form, both in thematic and structural detail as well as in the architectonic mold of the whole.⁴⁵ Mahler was too active and critical a spirit to hold fast, as perhaps Bruckner would have done, to a formal scheme, and to further develop and vary this as his form. For him, life held too much that urged him to an artistic release, the views that opened themselves to his restless will were too far-reaching, than that he could not have recognized for himself the necessity of a change in his creative style. Mahler would not have been of that deeply visionary creative nature that captures everywhere the essentials of things had he not recognized the extensive symbolic force of imagery in the large instrumental forms, and also the expressive power of strict polyphony. Certainly he would have never wished to apply them in the pedantic sense. Perhaps he was instead provoked to try them out on appropriate material and with that to transform them into a style that was fit for his nature. That the first attempt [202] in no way satisfied his desire is shown by a look at the Seventh Symphony, where Mahler once again takes the rondo—bound to variation form instead of to fugal development—as a layout for the mighty structure of a finale. All of the following works from this point on show how meaningful the working with a polyphonic style, especially in the Finale but also in certain particulars of the second movement, was for his musicianship. Mahler, until now almost always of a primarily vocal sensitivity and inclined toward homophonic construction of lines, becomes acquainted with the value of instrumental polyphonic style, with the possibilities for new intensification of expression that emerge from it, with the loosening of individual voices made independent, and above all with the

enrichment of harmony. Indeed, he is a romantic to too great a degree, and as such is too bound to the fundamental harmonic sensitivity of each musical conception to ever be capable of achieving the freedom in polyphonic style as, say, a Bach. Mahler's polyphony always remains, as far as the voice leading is considered, of a harmonic type, even where he avails himself of a contrapuntal style, as in the Fifth and later in the Eighth Symphony. Only in the two last works, *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony, is an effort shown to achieve a new type of heterophonic voice leading, to release the voices from their harmonic rules, allowing them to run next to each other according to their own impulses. Through these later experiments Mahler prepared the way for a development that followed him. They would hardly have been possible had not the turn to an instrumental polyphonic style, whose first witness is the Fifth Symphony, taken place. The astounding thing about this work and its creator is that the artist who stood in danger of falling into a certain manner turned with sudden resolve, following an inner command, to a new resource, a new complex of materials, and that out of this novel complex of materials the new form and symbolism were crystallized again. It is self-evident that such a resolve could spring out of no preconceived intention, only from an internal experience. Mahler hinted at this on an earlier occasion when he said about his first two symphonies, "Truth and poetry in sounds—and if one could understand how to read well therein, my life would of necessity and in deed appear transparent therein to him. So much are creating and experiencing linked with me that, if my existence from here on were to flow as peacefully as a brook on the meadow, I perceive that I would no longer be able to do anything right."⁴⁶

Mahler said this in relation to his First and Second Symphonies. However doubtlessly these words apply in their fundamental meaning to the Fifth and those that followed it just as

they did to the older works, there is still a difference to be perceived. The autobiographical and the anecdotal that can still be recognized in the early works and is attached to them are pushed back in the later symphonies in favor of a general and purely human basic idea. The element of personal experience was surely always at hand, but it remained a hidden germ and has no particular value for the later observer. Only the universal remains. Also in this respect, the step from the vocal symphony with obligatory singing voices to the instrumental symphony gives expression to an internal change. The subjective element of song disappears, and it dissolves into the objectifying representation of content seen in the purely symphonic instrumental style.

[203] If one looks at the Fifth Symphony as a whole, two characteristic features stand out: the enormous tension of the developmental curve and the blinding way in which Mahler deploys the sonic light effects and makes them into turning points. Both features are typical of the composer who, for the first time again after a long period, more correctly for the first time overall, writes a purely instrumental work and now avails himself of the orchestral language, almost as if intoxicated by the means of expression and intensification. Mahler would still create many an impetuous, grandly constructed symphonic movement. He never attempted again, however, buildups of the insatiability that is shown in the second, third and fifth movements of this symphony, always breaking off again, and always climbing again to towering heights. One may assume that he was acting in an artistically wise manner in the later limitation and in the effort to weave in sharper contrasts and through them to achieve buildups that are not only of a formally dynamic kind, but also of one regarding content, as well as in the avoidance of the type of shrill, massive light effects that are seen in the Fifth Symphony. It is true that final sonic buildups such as the entry of the hymn in the second and fifth movements have something that is

almost physically overwhelming. It is however also correct that the prevalence of the brass sound in this symphony strongly hindered its practical circulation, and that its effect in the idea is actually purer than in the immediate observation of the actual sonic image.

The drastic re-orchestration that Mahler later carried out does not change anything essential. Here it has nothing to do with technical questions of instrumental practice. Mahler was enough of a practical musician at the time of the Fifth Symphony's composition to know what is possible and works well. It has to do with a phenomenon that is inextricably bound to the essence of this symphony. One could just as well say that Mahler here overly strained all of his resources on the problem of symphonic form. This is not to be said—it would be a presumption and incorrect—it is rather that here the sonic realization of the idea pushes against the boundary of the possible. It was the idea of finding oneself out of the pain: “Hail to the joyous light of the world.” It was the song in praise of happiness in solitude and in creation. The next idea follows immediately upon this one: that of asserting oneself against the world. This becomes the form in Mahler's symphony of fate, the Sixth, the “Tragic.” [204 blank]

NOTES

- 1 In making this point, Bekker overstates the case. The Andante of the Sixth, for example, makes clear reference to the first of the *Kindertotenlieder* in certain figures at cadences. Moreover, the “reminiscences of contemporary songs” in the Fifth certainly have “influence on the development of the movements,” and have been a major point of departure for analysis of the symphony. Donald Mitchell, for example, in his extensive and profound essay on the Fifth, uses the work’s relationship to song—the last *Wunderhorn* song, “Der Tambourg’sell,” and the Rückert songs—as the launching point for his detailed and stimulating analysis. He sees “Der Tambourg’sell,” composed at the same time as the *Kindertotenlieder*, as a point of contact between the worlds of the *Wunderhorn* and Rückert songs. Certain contrapuntal devices are common between “Tambourg’sell” and the first of the *Kindertotenlieder*. The opening “Trauermarsch” of the Fifth has clear references to both of these songs. The Fifth, then, also symbolizes the *symphonic* transition, or “pivot,” between the *Wunderhorn* and Rückert phases. Later on, Mitchell will characterize the Adagietto movement as an “instrumental Rückert song” and state that the reference to “Lob des hohen Verstandes” at the beginning of the Finale is a last glance back at the *Wunderhorn* years. See “Eternity or Nothingness? Mahler’s Fifth Symphony,” in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 236-46, also pp. 312-20. See also Mitchell, “Mahler’s ‘Kammermusikton’” in the same volume, pp. 217-35, especially at 232-35. The association of each “cycle” of symphonies with a contemporary song cycle is repeatedly highlighted by Bekker throughout the book, including this chapter (pp. 399-406 below). See also the opening “Symphonic Style” chapter, pp. 66-68, the ending of the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 385-88, and the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde*, p. 716-17.
- 2 The process of Mahler’s re-orchestration, with a focus on the second trio of the Funeral March, is discussed in detail by Mitchell in “Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 251-75 and 280-85. Mitchell sees the second trio as a particularly crucial passage in the symphonic narrative, and it also provides a striking illustration of the process, techniques, and rationale behind Mahler’s re-orchestration. He includes the scores of the entire second trio in parallel pages from the 1904 first edition and the revised 1919 edition, which was prepared after Georg Göhler conducted the first performance of the “revised version” in 1914 (it was Göhler who received Mahler’s famous letter from New York in February 1911 in which Mahler discusses having finally finished the re-orchestration of the Fifth). The revised version of the passage is far more string-oriented, the winds and brass being deployed later and with more care. Mitchell states that in the revision, Mahler was attempting to use the sound of the “string orchestra” as a contrast at the beginning of the second trio—a contrast that was not there in the original version. It is apparent from his examples (and a statement at the beginning of the “Anmerkungen”) that Bekker is using the 1904 study score. This creates more confusion than usual in identifying the instrumentation of the examples, since the newest editions here differ more from the first published editions than in any other symphony. In certain examples, my identification of the instrumentation directly contradicts Bekker’s brief indications.
- 3 This statement is significantly cited by Mitchell in “Eternity or Nothingness,” p. 304. It is at this point that Mitchell laments the lack of an English edition of the book, as mentioned at the beginning of my introduction.
- 4 Bekker also speaks about Mahler and “thematic” work in the opening “Symphonic Style” chapter, p. 80.
- 5 These concepts are echoed in David B. Greene’s extensive, imaginative analysis of the Fifth in *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), pp. 37-137. One of Greene’s central questions in his analysis, which is heavily built around phrase structure, is whether the symphony’s changes of mood are “simply happening, or as being willed by their subject, or as being caused by

an external force” (p. 37). Greene uses several passages of the symphony, most notably the chorale at the end of the second movement, to illustrate his idea that “Mahler is exemplifying a process in which making decisions, taking risks, and arriving at goals are in the present perfect tense: it is what one has decided, what one has risked, what one has achieved that counts, not what one is deciding, risking, and achieving. There is no moment in which these things actually happen, for although at every moment one is looking ahead and working toward a future, when the expected future comes, one finds one has already been there” (p. 72).

- 6 Stephen E. Hefling challenges Bekker on this assertion, stating that “Bekker’s assessment would remain valid today had he not evaded the ambivalence in Mahler’s—not Rückert’s—partial repetition of that line” in the minor mode (following the quotation given by Bekker in the first example of this chapter). “Such affective duality is characteristically Mahlerian; he never fully resolves it,” Hefling says. “Yet Bekker maintained that the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies manifest *Freudenlicht der Welt*, whereas the blackness of the Sixth is merely material, not spiritual.” Hefling then says that Mahler’s colleagues Bruno Walter and Guido Adler agreed with Bekker on the Fifth and Seventh, but “knew better” about the Sixth. Adorno’s famous critique of Mahler as “a poor yea-sayer” (or “bad yes-man”), has since “precluded whitewashing the Fifth and Seventh.” See “Song and Symphony (II). From *Wunderhorn* to Rückert and the Middle-Period Symphonies: Vocal and Instrumental Works for a New Century,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Mahler*, edited by Jeremy Barham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 108.
- 7 This is the main march melody, which Mitchell argues is derived from “Der Tambourg’sell,” or at least that the song was a necessary step in shaping the idea into a symphonic form (“Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 238-40, 244-47).
- 8 Bekker does not specifically label the B-flat-minor outburst as a “trio” until after his analysis of the movement is complete and he is moving to the second movement. For Mitchell, the two “trios” of the march are among the most important passages in the symphony, as stated above. In contrast to the normal “interlude” role of a trio section in such a movement, these are the most dynamic passages, developing motives of the main march and introducing new ones, including almost all of the materials that will contribute to the contrasting sections of the second movement. The most important of these in the first trio is the triplet figure in the example labeled as 5-12, which also appears in the second trio and subsequently plays a large role in the second movement. Mitchell calls it the “ascent” or “aspiring” theme. The defiant nature of these trios, and the fact that they end in collapse, prefigures the collapse of the climactic chorale in the second movement. Moreover, the emergence of the opening fanfare as each trio collapses is reminiscent of the appearance of the same material (the so-called “kleiner Appell”) at the climax and collapse of the development section in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony. See “Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 247-51. Constantin Floros also compares the two trios and their transitions back to the main march material after the collapses of their climaxes (*Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], pp. 144-45).
- 9 Bekker’s identification of the “isolated voice” as a cello is a mistake. Even in the earliest edition, this voice (from m. 278) is played by muted violas. In the revisions, the first few measures were given to a non-muted solo viola, with the rest of the violas entering, muted, at m. 283.
- 10 A revision that would not have been available to Bekker, as it did not even appear in the first revised edition of 1919, involves the second note of this example, which was eventually changed to A in the later critical editions, more clearly articulating the A-minor triad and more distinctly anticipating the corresponding material in the second movement. Mitchell mentions this revision in the context of his extensive discussion of the “triplet factor” and its role in the two trios. Here, the “aspiring” figures form a portion of the main material, whereas in

the first trio, they had the nature of a “secondary element.” Mitchell points out that the assignment of the “aspiring” figures to a solo horn, in an almost *concertante* role, anticipates the *obbligato* horn of the Scherzo. Significantly, it is a portion of music from the agitated opening of the *first* trio that cuts off these triplets here, essentially reversing the roles of “primary” and “secondary” material between the two trios. Regarding the revision of the upbeat in this example, it is also significant that it is played against the triplet “fanfare” in the timpani that introduces this second “trio,” thus adding another dimension to the “triplet factor.” In addition, the upbeat contributes to a distinct affinity between this Trio II melody and the main Funeral March music. Mitchell eventually describes the Trio II melody as a “remodeling” of the main Funeral March material. See “Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 275-81. Bekker alludes to these connections between the two trios, as does Floros, as noted above.

- 11 This climax, with its collapse, anticipates, in the intensity of its sound, the arrival of the chorale in the second movement and possibly alludes to the chorale’s eventual collapse, far more so than the similar collapse at the end of the first trio (Mitchell, “Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 250, also note 8 above). Theodor W. Adorno also mentioned the moment in a discussion of Mahler’s “collapsing passages” as an example executed with “full mastery”: “It dynamizes the form, yet without the traditional formal departments being simply abolished by elaboration; rather, the dynamics of the catastrophe section are themselves also a character, a quasi-spatial field” (*Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], pp. 45-46).
- 12 Mitchell agrees with Bekker that the Funeral March and the second movement, the “Hauptsatz” or “main movement,” are interdependent and should not be considered individually. However, he emphasizes that the “Hauptsatz” is only as great as it is *because* of its “extraordinary relationship with the preceding ‘Trauermarsch,’ on which, indeed, it is entirely dependent and from which, unequivocally, its unique formal character derives.” This applies especially to the special role played by the two trios of the march (“Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 285).
- 13 Floros cites Bekker here and speaks of a “normal” sonata form (*The Symphonies*, p. 146). Mitchell is adamantly opposed to a reading of the movement in sonata form, despite the fact that Mahler placed repeat signs after the “exposition” in the autograph and later removed them (“Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 285-86). Mitchell’s analysis of the movement (pp. 287-300, particularly the chart on pp. 288-89) is extremely innovative and stimulating, and a sonata design plays no real role in his overview, but he is unjust in taking Floros (and by extension Bekker) to task about it. In fact, the articulations between exposition, development, and recapitulation are clear and indisputable, unlike, for example, the Finale of the Sixth Symphony. Bekker himself often expresses skepticism about sonata forms in certain movements that he considers more ambiguous (the first movements of the Third and Ninth Symphonies, for example—and Mitchell considers the sonata form in the former, particularly its recapitulation, to be slavishly employed to a fault). In light of this skepticism regarding other possible sonata designs, Bekker’s certainty here should not be dismissed as a complete misreading. Floros is careful to point out the “peculiarities” that “do not necessarily correspond to traditional sonata form” (pp. 147-48), including the sudden changes and discontinuity throughout the movement, which form the basis for Mitchell’s own analysis. Greene, whose overview of the movement is similar to Mitchell’s in many ways, also avoids making reference to a sonata form in his analysis, but does not disavow its validity (*Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 131). In his imaginative and detailed reading, Greene is more concerned with the idea of alternation between the passages using the main thematic material (which he calls the “anger sections”) and those sections based on material from the Funeral March (which he eventually terms the “peace-questing” sections), tracing their similarities and their eventual “convergence” toward the climactic chorale. A sonata form

does not serve his purpose as much as an examination of phrase structure (pp. 40-74). Mitchell's tabular analysis will be partially outlined below, as Bekker moves through the movement's structure.

- 14 Adorno comments extensively on the movement, and begins by citing Bekker's superlative praise here. In his discussion, Adorno states that it is a "full sonata movement." He continues: "Its proportions, the relation of the tempestuous allegro passages to the proliferating slow intrusions from the Funeral March, make it uncommonly difficult to perform. These proportions cannot be left to chance simply as what the composer ordained; from the outset the whole piece must be so clearly organized around the contrast that it does not lose momentum in the Andante sections; the changes constitute its form. It is of especial importance that even the Presto passages should be played distinctly, their whirling themes intact, without compromising the tempo; they balance the melodies of the Funeral March. Yet it is the formal principle of the headlong Presto that it should lead nowhere. For all its dynamism and vivid detail, the movement has no history, no direction, and really no emphatic dimension of time. Its lack of historical progress inclines it toward reminiscence; its energy, blocked in its forward rush, seems to flow backwards. Yet from there the music comes to meet it. The dynamic potential of the Funeral March, particularly of its second trio, is unfolded only retrospectively in a coherent, sonata-like through-composition, as a pendant to the Presto. What was fettered in the static form of the first movement is now released. But at the same time the interrupting reminiscences prepare for the chorale vision that saves the movement from circularity. Only through the formal correspondence between this vision and the slow interpolations can the movement assimilate the interrupting element without reverting to chaos. Vision and form determine each other. The latter closes with a coda. The vision has no conclusive force. Had it ended the movement, it would no longer have been a vision. But the coda reflects all that has gone before; in it the old storm finds a harmless echo" (*Mahler*, pp. 10-11). I have quoted this passage at some length because the ideas Adorno articulates here have a distinct influence on later analyses of the movement, including the examples cited here by Mitchell, Greene, and Floros. For Adorno, the chorale is one of the most significant of Mahler's "breakthroughs."
- 15 This is Mahler's first A-minor movement, and elicits the most extensive commentary by Bekker on the key and its significance. See also p. 476 on the Sixth, p. 724 on "Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde," and p. 805 on the Rondo-Burlesque movement of the Ninth.
- 16 On the significance of the minor ninth as a leading, motivic interval in this movement and the second trio of the Funeral March, see Mitchell, "Eternity or Nothingness?" p. 291 and Greene, *Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 43.
- 17 This is the first of Mitchell's "cut-off" passages. There are four more, always involving these prominent woodwind runs. The fifth and last of these is the one that brings an abrupt end to the fading chorale before the coda. The "cut-off" topic is one of five markers used by Mitchell to trace the (specifically non-sonata) form of the movement. Mitchell connects these "cut-off" passages, again, to the trio sections of the Funeral March. In this context, he even sees a derivation of the main theme of the Allegro "Hauptsatz" to the turbulent opening of the first trio, a connection that is far less commonly observed ("Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 290-91).
- 18 The quotations from the second trio, which play the role of the second theme in this movement, are the second of Mitchell's markers, which he continues to refer to as the "remodeled" march theme. Consciously avoiding any suggestion of a sonata form, Mitchell does not label these quotations as a "second theme." There are two more of these, the E-flat-minor appearance in the (*pace* Mitchell) development section, and the last one in the recapitulation. They are a major element of Greene's "peace-questing" sections (see above, note 13).

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- 19 This quotation of the “ascent” or “aspiring” theme (a manifestation of Mitchell’s “triplet factor”), which has its origins in the first trio of the Funeral March and is also prominent in the second trio, is the third of Mitchell’s “markers.” It appears three more times, first combined with the E-flat-minor statement of the “remodeled march” (in the development section), then, analogous to this first appearance, as part of the secondary section in the recapitulation, and finally in the approach to the chorale at m. 400. This last appearance is preceded, at m. 392, by a quotation from the *opening* bars of the first trio, which was also quoted at a key moment of the second trio. Mitchell includes these quotations in his discussion of the “cut-off” gesture and its evolution (see note 17 above). He also points out the significance of the combination of this “ascent” theme with its “descent,” which is most apparent in the trombone dialogue of the second trio in the Funeral March (mm. 357-68). See “Eternity or Nothingness? p. 292). Greene points out an important divergence between the figure’s appearances in the two movements. In the Funeral March, the two triplets are followed by a repeated note and then an upward resolution. In the second movement, the rising line in triplets is followed by a leap and then a falling whole step (see *Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 41). Compare this example with Example 5-12 above. Like Mitchell, Greene also associates the theme with “aspiration.”
- 20 The second of Mitchell’s “cut-off” passages and the beginning of the development section. In the autograph score, Mahler initially placed a repeat sign here after m. 145, at the resumption of the initial bass figure in A minor.
- 21 Compare the violin figure in the first measure of this example with the shape of the line in longer notes in the third and fourth measures of Example 5-28. This is an example of Greene’s “convergence” of the two types of music (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 59-61).
- 22 Mitchell’s third “cut-off” passage, followed by what Floros memorably calls the “monody of the ‘lamenting’ cellos” (*The Symphonies*, pp. 146-47).
- 23 Several fascinating moments pass by in close succession here at the end of the development section, beginning with the sudden interpolation of the Funeral March melody in the example given here as 5-36, and culminating in the brief breakthrough of A major in anticipation of the larger chorale. All of them have the character of “interruptions.” The entire sequence has generated so much later commentary that in hindsight, Bekker’s nonchalant description of the events is unusual, although it should be noted that he pauses to introduce an example at each key moment and that he has lavished praise upon the entire design. For Mitchell, the Funeral March melody is so unique that he assigns it its own marker, his fourth. He argues that it could have also been grouped with his fifth and final set of markers, which he explicitly calls “interruptions,” since they directly contradict what is expected, rejecting the implications of an immediately preceding upbeat. The A-flat-major march (Example 5-37) is the first of these, followed immediately by the moment of temporary triumph in A major. This is followed by the fourth and penultimate “cut-off.” The final “interruption” is the climactic D-major chorale itself (“Eternity or Nothingness? pp. 291-93). Greene also dwells on the sequence, noting that the Funeral March quotation cuts off its first two beats (which, for Mitchell, enhances its “interrupting” character”), then discussing the “jaunty” march and the “splendor” of the A-major climax (*Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 58). Adorno places a focus on this introduction of “new” elements toward the end of the development section, comparing and contrasting it to Beethoven’s process in the “Eroica.” Even though the “new” elements introduced by Mahler here are based on previous material, they arrive as “fresh entities removed from the scenery of the process,” whereas Beethoven’s E-major theme is completely new but its preparation is so organic that its arrival causes no great surprise (*Mahler*, pp. 71-72).
- 24 This idea fits well with Greene’s idea of “convergence” between the opposing elements toward the chorale.

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- 25 Mitchell's analysis of the chorale focuses on its inevitable collapse ("Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 293-96) while Greene emphasizes the ambiguous phrase structure and the pivotal role of the note F-sharp (mentioned by Bekker) to arrive at his conclusion that while everything approaching the chorale is built upon striving toward a goal, the chorale itself projects the impression that its emergence and course have already been decided beforehand (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 62-74). Adorno cited Bekker on the chorale's effect hinging on the silence of the brass right before it (*Mahler*, p. 119).
- 26 Mitchell admires both the structure and character of this coda, which comes after his fifth and final "cut-off." He calls it an "exceptional feat of orchestral refinement" ("Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 296-97).
- 27 There seems to be a consensus that the Scherzo was the first movement to be composed. Mitchell presents arguments for this, and revisits the idea that the movement had its origin in the program sketch for the Fourth Symphony presented by Bekker in the previous chapter. Bekker also surmised that the movement entitled "Die Welt ohne Schwere" ("The World Without Gravity") may have eventually found its final form as the Scherzo of the Fifth. See "Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 300-1. See also Bekker's chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 336-37 and p. 390, note 16.
- 28 Mitchell does agree with Bekker on his first point, that the movement is Mahler's first scherzo in the classical sense of a dance piece, but points out that in asserting that Mahler would not again return to this type, Bekker "oddly overlooked the Scherzo of the Ninth" ("Eternity or Nothingness?" p. 304).
- 29 Adorno described the movement as a "development scherzo." The several dance melodies, or "characters," are presented as a sort of dance suite and then combined contrapuntally (*Mahler*, pp. 102-3). This concept of Adorno's, which is somewhat anticipated by Bekker's thoughts, has been cited by several later writers, including Mitchell ("Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 302, 304-5) and Floros (*The Symphonies*, p. 151). Adorno and Floros describe the movement as a scherzo with two trios, but Mitchell seems to view the entire central section, including the brief reprise of scherzo material after the first "trio" (mm. 174-221), along with the "second trio," as a single large trio section. Bekker himself makes no reference to any "trio" section in his analysis.
- 30 In his analysis of the Scherzo, Greene frequently cites Bekker, beginning with this sentence (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 133-34, n. 15, n. 17, n. 20, n. 23). Greene's analysis of the movement is again original. He does recognize the first appearance of the waltz in B-flat as the movement's "trio," but considers much of what follows, including the brief scherzo reprise and the entire "second trio," as a huge extension of that trio. The scherzo reprise even serves as the "trio's trio" (p. 91). This structure, however, is secondary to Greene's primary division into three parts, where the first "trio" is grouped with the opening scherzo characters, followed by a second section the includes the brief scherzo reprise and the "second trio," and then a third section, which functions like a recapitulation, from m. 490. Greene asserts that the various subsections (Adorno's "characters" or Floros's "periods") in the first large section begin aimlessly, neither growing out of what precedes them nor anticipating what is to follow, completely self-contained. All of them, however, end in a conventional and straightforward way. In the second large section, the subsections are goal-directed at the beginning, and then drift into aimless wandering without closure at the end. The third large section removes the distinction between these processes, but the coda restores them in a new way (pp. 74-103).
- 31 Bekker's thoughts here are echoed by Deryck Cooke, who also sees a "dance of life, evoking all the bustle of a vital existence" (*Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music* [London: Cambridge University Press, 1980], pp. 82-83). Mitchell disagrees, pointing out the many "extraordinary moments of darkness and frenzy" and the movement's "notable accumulation of minor keys." These, Mitchell argues, undermine the implications of the

key of D major, which was indicated as the ultimate goal in the chorale of the previous movement, a goal that is not completely achieved here (“Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 301-2).

- 32 Bekker strikingly gives no real notice to the prominent descending figure first heard in the trumpet at mm. 222-223, a major component of the “second trio” that follows, whose principal tune is the horn melody in this example.
- 33 This moment, a key marker in the “second trio,” or, as Mitchell puts it, the “central episode” of the trio, is the culmination of the heavy emphasis given to the horns throughout the movement, of which the presence of the *obbligato* solo horn is only a part. Adorno’s translator, Edmund Jephcott, indicates that this is the point at which Adorno indicated an important “caesura” that would be repeated in the recapitulation (*Mahler*, p. 111). Mitchell, citing Floros, who in turn was citing Richard Specht, elaborates on an apparent parallel between this Scherzo and Goethe’s poem “An Schwager Kronos.” Floros only quotes a portion of the poem, but Mitchell gives it in its entirety, and draws a further parallel with Schubert’s setting of the poem. Schubert’s song includes a “turbulent chromatic interpolation,” like those in Mahler’s Scherzo, followed by cheerful horn signals. Most relevant is the poem’s reference in its last stanza to the horn blown by the stagecoach driver (a postillion’s horn), which Mahler possibly represents in the fascinating overlapping horn entries here. The *obbligato* solo horn itself recalls the post horn solo of the Third Symphony. The poem’s vision of a dance of death is enacted in the wild climax at the end of the development section (see note 35 below). See “Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 302-7. See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 153-54.
- 34 The same descending figure mentioned in note 32, now in the violas, mm. 314-315, is again skipped over by Bekker.
- 35 One thing that has been nearly universal in later analyses of the movement is the description of the entire passage from mm. 429-489, described by Bekker beginning after Example 5-63 and ending here, as a “development” section or at least a passage that resembles a development, usually making reference to Adorno’s “development scherzo.” Mitchell calls the wild conclusion a “veritable dance of death,” and points out that the “central trio section” ends right before this section (“Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 302). See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 150, 154 and Greene, *Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 94.
- 36 The most extensive study of Mahler’s revisions, or “Retuschen” to the scores of other composers, including Beethoven, is the dissertation of David A. Pickett, “Gustav Mahler as an Interpreter” (Ph.D. diss., University of Surrey, 1989).
- 37 Bekker gives his examples from the song in F major, the key in which it was originally composed (and the key of the Adagietto), although it was later transposed to E-flat major, and the most authoritative version of the orchestral score is in the latter key. See Stephen E. Hefling, “The Rückert Lieder,” in *The Mahler Companion*, Mitchell and Nicholson (ed.), p. 355. Hefling accepts the affinity and relationship of the song to the Adagietto, particularly in the endings of the two pieces (pp. 358-60). Mitchell is more skeptical, and believes there is more to be gained in the comparison to the second of the *Kindertotenlieder*, where Bekker also pointed out connections (“Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 317-18). Mitchell says much about how the Adagietto belongs to the world of the Rückert songs, even calling it “a wordless Rückert song for orchestra alone, or, rather, for string orchestra and harp” (p. 312). Adorno also noticed these connections, calling the Adagietto a “song without words” while mentioning other song quotations throughout the symphony (*Mahler*, p. 22). See also note 1 above.
- 38 Adorno states that “the string Adagietto, in reality a self-contained introductory field to the Rondo Finale, which

draws on it thematically, is formally influential through its contrast to the overall sound of the symphony, in which the winds were hitherto predominant” (*Mahler*, p. 119). Mitchell believes that there is no precedent for this string-only movement in the post-Beethoven symphony (“Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 311).

- 39 Mitchell’s discussion of the movement’s curious reception history, particularly in the period after Bekker wrote his book, is extremely interesting, and is tied to what Mitchell calls the “generally sorry history of the reception of Mahler’s symphonies between the two World Wars” (“Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 309). The fact that the movement has been so frequently performed outside of its proper context between the two large D-major movements has affected the manner of its performance, particularly in the area of tempo. See pp. 308-11.
- 40 Adorno draws attention to the use of the descending second, “an interval for which Mahler had a general predilection,” in this epilogue, or *Abgesang* (*Mahler*, p. 48).
- 41 Bekker is referring to earlier score directions. The score as now known reads “Allegro giocoso. Frisch” (“Fresh” or “Brisk”). The reference to the “accompanying voices of the clarinets” is also based on the original orchestration. These accompanying lines that were originally given to clarinets were transferred to the horns so that the melody and accompaniment now have the same timbre. Bekker’s examples and descriptions throughout the Finale indicate his use of the 1904 study score that lacked Mahler’s final revisions. See note 2 above.
- 42 Again, many of Bekker’s observations are reflected in later analysis. Although Adorno considered the movement too lightweight in relation to the first three, he did admire the “musical quick-motion picture” (“kompositorischen Zeitraffer”), which Floros applies to the fast quotations of the chorale and Mitchell to those of the Adagietto. See Adorno, *Mahler*, p. 136, Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 157-58, and Mitchell, “Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 322-23. Mitchell especially admires how the quotations in the movement are so seamlessly integrated and do not work like interruptions. Bekker’s statement that the chorale arrives as something that is expected and prepared has an echo in Greene’s analysis, which is based upon the principle that after the initial exposition of themes, the movement is a succession of passages that strive toward goals that never really arrive. Instead, though deceptive motions (which Greene calls “bumps”), these passages actually arrive at recollections of things that have gone before. This even applies to the climactic arrival of the chorale, which arrives as a memory of a climax, a recollection of a fulfillment, or even as a memory of a memory, since the chorale in the second movement moves toward what it has already achieved. Greene also finds connections to the Scherzo and the Funeral March, thus making the Finale a true summation (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 103-31).
- 43 Bekker, working from the earlier edition, indicates the instrumentation as horn, clarinets, and flutes. The orchestration of this passage was greatly altered, and the indication “*martellato*” was also removed. Mitchell ascribes great importance to this moment as the return of the “triplet factor,” “a mini-celebration of all the aspiring music that heretofore has met with defeat” (“Eternity or Nothingness?” pp. 324-25), as does Greene, who, like Mitchell, uses it to connect Part III to Part I (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 113-14).
- 44 Bekker’s interpretation of the chorale in the Finale as the ultimate summit and fulfillment, the resolution of all conflicts within the symphony, the achievement of that which the chorale in the second movement could not reach, is not in dispute. Nonetheless, the slightly negative nuance given to it by Mitchell and Greene adds a layer of complexity. According to Mitchell, “one knows, of course, that this time round the chorale will not fade, will not have its life-blood drained from it, as was the case in the parallel passage in [the second movement]; and yet, even after the ultimate unison D has sounded . . . one has to concede that one’s memory of the chorale’s fate in [the second movement] has not been entirely erased; nor could it be, nor perhaps should it be” (“Eternity or Nothingness?” p. 325). The juxtaposition of these opposites—eternity and nothingness—provides the title of

Mitchell's essay. Greene goes even further, stating that "the listener cannot help being aware that it is less glorious and luminous than the second-movement climax" and that "fulfillment takes place, but in the form of remembering fulfillment" (*Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 119).

45 Mitchell also spoke of Mahler's abandonment of programs in the Fifth, stating that "the 'programme' went underground, so to say" ("Eternity or Nothingness?" pp. 282-83). Floros discusses the symphony's "inner" (as opposed to overt) program (*The Symphonies*, pp. 141-42).

46 This quotation is from Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler* (Leipzig, E. P. Tal, 1923), p. 8, which Bekker would have known from the commemorative issue of *Der Merker* from March 1912 (3/5), pp. 184-88 at 184. See note 2 for the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, p. 389.

[205]

SIXTH SYMPHONY

[206 blank]

[207] **Of** Mahler's complete symphonies, apart from the Ninth, which occupies an exceptional place, the three instrumental symphonies, Nos. 5, 6, and 7, are the most seldom performed. Among these, the Sixth has had particularly scarce appearances on concert programs.¹ The main reason for this may be first of all that the works including voices make a stronger outward impression on listeners, and are also more open to understanding, while the purely instrumental compositions offer fewer points of connection. Added to this is that among all of Mahler's works, it is precisely the Sixth that is intellectually and sonically the most austere, the least accessible, and the most challenging. The austerity already speaks from the choice of key: A minor. It speaks from the course of the symphony, which is known by a subtitle, the "Tragic," that apparently stems from Mahler himself.² Finally, it speaks from the construction. More decisively than ever before, the essential elements of the symphonic plot are directed toward the Finale. This obtains absolute predominance, and demands, to a completely unusual degree, a continual increase of intellectual concentration. It would not be correct to press for more frequent performances of the Sixth Symphony in particular in order to overcome the obstacles that arise from it. Preconditions for the understanding of Gustav Mahler's oeuvre are that one should learn it in its entirety, see the connections from work to work, and comprehend how one grows out of the other and how one determines the other. Only then is it possible to see works of exceptional character such as the Sixth not as offspring of a strange and overwrought fantasy, but rather as organic members of a spiritual Becoming. Out of such an understanding of their developmental conditions is to be found the correct relationship to their apparent abnormalities. These really are only apparent. They attract attention when one considers the individual work outside the context of the neighboring works. When the connection is

established, one recognizes the whole as an organism growing in logical continuity. With no other symphonic composer is the unity of the complete works so sharply defined, and therefore their acquaintance as necessary as with Mahler, for no other similarly restricted himself to symphonic composition. Of his nine symphonies, Beethoven created eight in a single period of his life, between his 30th and 42nd years. He likewise maintained a certain consistency in the inner drive toward the symphonic form. All the same, he wrote large works in other areas—opera, piano, and chamber music—during this time. Bruckner's interest turned occasionally to the Mass, to choral compositions, and also to chamber music. They offered him options for the display of ideas that could find no room in the symphony. Mahler is the only one who exclusively dedicates his creative work to the symphony. With him, there never stirs a desire to write in other genres. In that area where he seems to leave the symphonic realm, in the composition of song, he really only seeks access to new symphonic structures. A unity in his symphonic work thus arises that cannot be found to the same degree anywhere else. Out of this follows the necessity of understanding the works not only as single appearances, but rather in their relationships to each other. Out of this follows the recognition that Mahler, not only within the symphonies, [208] established a new creative principle, perceived in a monumental way through the combination of several movements into parts. His constructive drive reached further, beyond the individual work. He placed this individual work into relationships to similar works, and unified it with them to arrive at a symphonic cycle. The First through the Fourth Symphonies make up such a cycle, as do the instrumental symphonies from the Fifth through the Seventh. The Eighth joins itself to them as a Finale. Another such group, whose closure is determined by mood, is that of *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony. These two

symphonic tetralogies, along with the epilogue of the two farewell works, are inwardly evolved units. The works stand in the same relationship to each other as do the movements of a single symphony. Only through this recognition of the whole can the single work be essentially and inwardly understood in its order.

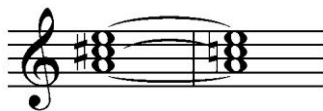
The Sixth Symphony in particular requires a comparative reference of its musical and intellectual construction to the two adjacent works. Mahler's view of life is not pessimistic. He understands well the certain suffering in the destiny of the individual. Yet life always appears worth living to him. With all his senses he loves the earth, from youth on through a fulfilled, happy adulthood, and on up until the melancholy farewell blessing of the solitary one. Of the 39 movements in his nine symphonies, only ten finish in minor. Nothing could be further from him than the proclamation of an apocalypse as the artistic formation of a message of destruction. Especially not after he had just risen up over the grief of the past in order to greet the "joyous light of the world" in the Fifth Symphony, and to allow the unconquerable source of creativity and work to bubble up in the Finale. Perhaps just now, however, the question about the relationship of the striving individual to the powers of this world must have pressed itself upon him. No longer the question regarding internal inhibitions, which were conquered by the Fifth Symphony, but rather the question about the external, the resistance of matter. He had felt exactly this with a consistent and particular gravity, and it became for Mahler a symbol for the idea of the tragic. "I have always honestly tried to set my goal high. My efforts could not always be crowned with success. The resistance of matter, the malice of the object is handed to nobody as it is to the practicing artist. Yet I have always placed my whole being upon it, and subjected my person to the cause, placing duty above my inclinations." In 1907, Mahler wrote

this in the farewell letter to his Vienna musicians.³ The Sixth arose a few years earlier, from 1903 to 1904. It may well be that even at that time, when Mahler's work in Vienna was already leaning toward its end and embittering battles often paralyzed the flight of his ideas, similar thoughts and moods arose in him. Their precipitation was formed into the Sixth. It signifies no conclusive confession, but more likely a moving episode in Mahler's life. An internal crisis that seizes the strong one more violently, the more he becomes aware of his solitude.

These are the contrasts from which the tragedy of the work emerges: consciousness of solitude, such as had resulted as a consequence of the development toward the Fifth Symphony, and recognition of the resistance of matter. The [209] Fifth Symphony reflected in its course the happiness of creation and of "becoming lost" to the world in the song. The Sixth leads into the tragedy of loneliness. It is to be understood as a fight of the will against the inflexible, the crushing, and the blunt. For these contrasts, solitude and the battle against matter, Mahler again created sound symbols: cowbells and a hammer. Both are not to be understood as the superficial employment of unusual sound production. They are "intended as highly symbolic."⁴ Cowbells are, according to Mahler's own words, the last sound that still penetrates from the earth to the solitary one on the highest peak, a symbol of complete aloneness, of standing high above the world.⁵ They ring out in those places where the music achieves its most extreme sense of distance: before the closing section of the first movement, which brings an ascent to the heights, in the Andante, which represents the dream and rapture of the solitary one, and in the Finale, in preparation for the last struggle. The second symbol is the hammer. Mahler prescribes the sound of the hammer at three places in the Finale: "Kurzer, mächtig aber dumpf hallender Schlag von nicht metallischem Charakter" ("Short, powerful, but dull echoing blow of nonmetallic

character”). This sound effect was also ridiculed and made the subject of cheap jokes, and also criticized as unaesthetic. One like the other is based on pathetic misunderstanding. Mahler envisioned the suggestion of an intervention from something otherworldly, something overpowering, something fateful, something against whose shattering, supernatural effect man can no longer fight.⁶ He arrives at the edge of his capacity, but wishes to extend beyond this and is struck to the ground. This is the meaning of the hammer.

Besides the sound color symbols, the Sixth also has a motivic one. In its idea as well as in the nature of its application it is also an innovation in the symphonic art. Mahler gives the symphony a motto in the form of a short motive, the change from A major to A minor:



[Example 6-1: A-major—A-minor motto]

It is not a theme. Because of its purely harmonic appearance, without a melodic or rhythmic physiognomy, it was not suited as such. It does not even provide the foundation for thematic or motivic formation. It appears, however, in all the decisive moments of the symphonic narrative, now in held whole-measure chords, now dissolved into hard-thrusting eighth notes, always a determinant, like an irrevocable sentence of fate. In this short harmonic formula, Mahler has pressed out the pure content of that which hovered before him as basic knowledge: the sense of being powerfully pressed down, the downward pull from major to minor, from the major to the minor third. It is the only musical event of the motto, but it is a deeply characteristic one. The remembrance is here awakened to a work that lies far behind, the Second Symphony. Its first movement also ends in the sounds of the suspended alternation of major and minor, until

suddenly the major third is decisively knocked down to minor. What was a short episode in the early work here becomes a fundamental symbol, such that Mahler neither before this nor in the following works again employed. The note sequence A–G–E that pervades *Das Lied von der Erde* most likely rests upon similar ideas, but it does not have the same sonic and pictorial strength as the motto of the Sixth, and is also not as intentionally led into the consciousness of the hearer, but rather works more as a secret stimulating impetus.

[210] With such an elemental subject, the orchestral resources naturally needed to be stretched again to the utmost level. There is an increase in number even in comparison to the Fifth Symphony. Woodwinds are quadrupled throughout, clarinets supplemented by the shrill D clarinet. The horn group grows from six to eight, the group of trumpets from four to six, and the trombones are increased from three to four. The percussion consists of thirteen instruments: timpani, glockenspiel, cowbells, deep bell sounds, bass drum, triangle, snare drum, cymbals, slapstick (whip), xylophone, tam-tam, rute, and hammer.⁷ Despite this massive contingent, to which a celesta also comes for the first time in Mahler, and despite individual sound clusters of explosive power, the complete effect of this symphony is less violent than that of the Fifth. Mahler does reach for individual intensifying devices of the most unusual dynamic power. His disposal of the complete forces, however, is strikingly economical. He avoids the acoustically demanding chorale effects, in particular those of the heavy brass. He also forms the themes without any preliminary view of their presentation by the brass instruments. Woodwinds and strings take a stronger share of the melodic lead than in the Fifth. The primitive choral contrasts shown by the orchestra of the Fifth, which gave the dynamic construction a terraced quality, are changed for the sake of a more transparent line of sound, a more strongly individualized

treatment of instruments.

In the formal construction, Mahler avoids indicating a division into parts. The symphony is in a simple four-movement plan: *Allegro energico*, *Andante moderato*, *Scherzo*, *Finale*. Despite the lack of authentic prescriptions for structural division, one can group the symphony into two parts, in that one groups the three opening movements together and considers them as a preparation for the *Finale*. One can also assume a three-level structure similar to that of the Fifth and later of the Seventh: both outer movements as cornerstones, the *Andante* and *Scherzo* as a middle group. The triple division is justified insofar as the actual symphonic narrative is prepared in the first movement and delivered in the finale. The *Andante* and *Scherzo*, the one as a reverie and the other as a comical fantasy, stand like intermezzos between the two outer movements. One could interpret the first movement as the forward march of a wanderer in high places. Carrying heavy unanswered questions and doubts, he strives upward in solitude, in order to find, far from the daily routine, strength for the confrontation with the puzzles of existence that press upon him. The idyll of the *Andante*, which builds up to a visionary excitement, and the eerie manifestations of the *Scherzo* bring diversions and new outlooks, but no solution. Only the *Finale* conjures the elemental powers, stretches the forces to their utmost intensity, and compels the absolute baring of the inner drive, inhibited by no more restrictions. Will and fate grapple with each other, and fate introduces the three hammer blows upon which the will is broken. The tragedy of individual existence, the predetermination of the destruction, and the powerlessness against dark, incomprehensible forces all lead to the downfall. There are few works of art, especially of music, that depict this downfall and make it known with such fanatical mercilessness or with such unrelenting severity. That is perhaps [211] also what makes this

symphony so much less accessible and even initially gives it something repulsive: the oppressive circle of thoughts and moods from which, in contrast to all other works of Mahler, it shows no way out. The tragedy of the inevitable, naturally determined destruction of all striving through otherworldly powers, a depiction of a hopeless fight against fate that cannot be resisted by any human power, finds here a direct and precipitous blow. The burdensome gravity of a world view that brutally rejects every objection has something crippling in its awful one-sidedness. This tragic symphony thus belongs to those works in which the listener only arrives at an opinion of their purely artistic value after overcoming their substance.

The first movement is driving march. More generally, it is a march built upon “violent but precise” (“heftig, aber markig”) striding rhythms, filled with an energy of motion that knows no hesitation, no softness, no consideration besides its incessantly piercing and driving will. Mahler used the type of the march frequently in his symphonies, so frequently in fact that some critics have found therein a sign of weakness or perhaps of single-mindedness. Up until the Sixth, every symphony, with the exception of the Fourth, contains a movement in the character of a march. The First Symphony begins with the cheerful wanderer piece, and the Third with the entry march of Pan and his disciples. The Second and Fifth open with funeral marches, and another funeral march is found in the First Symphony as its third movement. Mahler also often makes use of the march in his songs, specifically in the youthful songs and the *Wunderhorn* songs. “Der Schildwache Nachtlid” begins “marchlike” (“marschartig”), “Trost im Unglück” likewise with an “audacious” (“verwegen”) march melody. “Heute marschieren wir” carries the “jaunty march tempo” (“kecke Marschtempo”) already in the opening text, the intimate,

profound “Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen” is, despite the marking of “verträumt, leise” (“dreamy, quietly”), the descriptive presentation of a march fantasy, “Zu Straßburg am der Schanz”, the cheerful “Scheiden und Meiden”, and the melancholy “Nicht Wiedersehen” are pieces of deliberately pronounced march character, but above all are the two most large-scale *Wunderhorn* songs, the “Tambour’sell” with the characteristic tempo “Gemessen, dumpf” (“Measured, muffled”) and “Revelge” with the prescriptive “Marching continually forward” (“Marschierend. In einem fort”).

The comparison of the *Wunderhorn* songs with the Rückert songs shows that in the later songs Mahler no longer uses the type of the march that was preferred by him through the years. He also gradually drops it in the symphonies. The opening movements of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies are Mahler’s last march structures in a larger style. The series closes with the first movement of the Sixth. Only the first “Nachtmusik” of the Seventh still carries march-like traits, but they are of a completely different kind than the earlier large march movements. There the march is a stylistic device, while before it was a formative idea. Therein is found the meaning of the march type for Mahler the symphonist and the overall musician as such. It is not that he took the march as a pattern. The variety of the march characters in the symphonies as well as in the songs shows that there is no question of a poverty in creation or of the need for reliance [212] on certain basic rhythmic types. The march idea was important to Mahler in other respects during the first creative period. As a rhythmic and architectonic form it corresponded to the folk qualities of melody that Mahler emphasized in this period. It provided a suitable frame for the simply cut themes, and also offered the possibility for broad harmonic periods of intensification laid out in large expanses. In this respect the march corresponds to the style of the *Wunderhorn*

time. Its frequent use in the songs and symphonies of the first half of Mahler's creative output can be explained by the desire for a rhythmic and architectonic formal design that was appropriate for the basic stylistic attitude of this time.

Beyond this, however, there was still something else that bound Mahler to the march type up until the Sixth Symphony, and this is to be seen as an actual formal idea. In the march was included the presentation of progress, of movement, and of emerging in the motion and in the unceasing variation. Out of this idea, the march becomes an integral part of Mahler's symphonic nature. It was this rearranging of itself from moment to moment, this constant actuality, this consistent forward striding for the sake of striding that corresponded to an inner need to create in the Mahlerian will, which was more drive than consciousness, more joy in activity as such than a well-defined goal. "Marschierend. In einem fort," this performance indication of "Revelge," is characteristic of that which Mahler requires of the march in general. He desired this "in einem fort" ("continually forward"), with restlessness as a stylistic and formal principle that would then lead to a particular result in a particular case. And so the most large-scale movement of the *Wunderhorn* symphonies, the opening movement of the Third, was identified as a musical and formal representation of "Becoming." The tonal symbolization of this Becoming could not be seen more urgently than through the "Marschierend, in einem fort" that stands as an invisible motto above the score.

Mahler gradually let go of this basic idea of determining form, the representation of emerging, in the second half of his creative output. Just as his song settings turn in their character and attitude of feeling from direct experience to a description of conditions, so also does his symphonic composition lose in some degree the actual representation of experience. It

passes over into a statement of confession that determines other stylistic structures. A contrapuntally rich and motivic life arises. The structural lines are more distinctly demarcated than in the earlier works, which give preference to the technique of purely linear expression. It is not concerned with an explication of ideas that branches into a psychological or analytical basis of thinking. Mahler's counterpoint is a synthesis, built from a summation of themes that becomes necessary in the later symphonies in light of the fullness and diversity of ideas that crash against each other.

The gradual turning away from the march type is therefore related to the stylistic change in Mahler's creation, but without corresponding to this change in every aspect. The realizing, the attraction of immediate clarity, which bound Mahler to the march, was in effect beyond the stylistic divide of the Fifth Symphony. It again came into play at the moment where an internal occasion prompted Mahler to turn to the march form. Such an [213] occasion arose with the first movement of the Sixth. It was meant to musically symbolize an upward thrust or an ascent. Similar to the idea of Becoming in the opening movement of the Third, so in the Sixth is the idea of climbing, of the creative will gradually lifting itself. For this idea, whose representation again requires an immediate presence and an exciting experience, the march was the closest symbol and the most suitable formal and rhythmic tonal embodiment. It takes nothing away from vitality of this march "in einem fort" that Mahler here, for the only time after the First Symphony, repeats the exposition note for note, as was the custom in the classical symphony. Until now, the repetition had become superfluous in light of the extensive layout and the advancing development, which tolerated no reflection, in Mahler's symphonic movements. In the Sixth it proved itself not only as not disturbing, but even desirable. The movement was laid

out in a comparatively concise way, and an expansion of content to add more weight with respect to the Finale seemed appropriate. There was no danger of recapitulating musical stages of development that had already been overcome. The goal of this movement's development is only to make the upward thinking comprehensible. This upward thrust has nothing of the enthusiastic energy of youth. It grows out of hardship, out of necessity, and out of the recognition of difficult, decisive questions that can only be resolved at the most extreme heights. This upward thrust deploys itself in the face of a violently pressing force. It arises not from joyful excitement, but rather from the dutiful force of will.

Like the complete structure, the individual themes of the movement stand under the sign of the basic idea. A short introduction begins. It is only five measures, but in them the formal will of the whole is already concentrated. Mahler, who until now had preferred German movement headings and only occasionally employed Italian indications, uses both of them this time. This was surely not from a whim, but because he perceived the need for supplementation. “*Allegro energico, ma non troppo, heftig, aber markig*” (“*Allegro energico, ma non troppo, violent, but precise*”)—both together give the mixture of defiance, energy, and wildness that Mahler here imagines. The basses enter with rough, thrusting, restlessly driving *staccato* quarter notes on A. The snare drum accompanies with brief strokes. Climbing from below to above, strings and woodwinds find their way in. A short-breathed motive, lifted stepwise with stubborn emphasis on the weak beats, thrusts itself jerkily upward, as if a burden must be shaken off in order to obtain freedom of forward motion:

[Example 6-2: strings, mm. 1-5, harmonies not complete on upbeat figures]

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Violin (Viol.) and Trombone (Tbn.). The Violin part is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some with accents. The Trombone part is written on a single staff with a bass clef. It also begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some with accents. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff*, *cresc.*, and *fff*. There are also some performance instructions like "04" and "8va basso" (8va basso). The score is for measures 1 through 4.

[214] The most extreme strength of tone is summoned. On the upbeat, full of fanatical energy, the violins, in order to strengthen the sound, must play the A doubled, with the fourth finger and the open string. The unbridled approaching of the theme is marked through this as well as through the two almost roaring chords, with which eight horns support the opening measures. The theme initially obtains no closure, and is only a restless will. The first statement in A minor is followed in the fifth measure by a repetition in D minor from three trombones, interrupted by the precipitous, triple *forte* motive of a seventh in the strings:



[Example 6-4: strings, m. 13]

The bass rhythms of the opening immediately press after it. It sounds “garishly” (“grell”) from the oboes:

[Example 6-5: oboes, mm. 14-18; first violins, mm. 16, 18; first and second violins, mm. 19-21; trumpet, mm. 20-22]

Rise and fall alternate. While trumpets climb upward with the theme, violins and violas plunge precipitously to the depths. But the intensity of the motion does not subside. It leads from the E in the basses to a new A-minor idea related to the first:

[Example 6-6: unison strings and winds, mm. 25-29 (not all instruments remain in unison)]

Characteristic of the themes of this movement and of the entire work are the wide leaps spanning several octaves in almost every measure. The jaggedness of this thematic material, which reaches passionately beyond itself, corresponds to the unbridled defiance of the will. It is given a contrasting supplement by the basses, which tenaciously persist on one note, thrusting in restless uniformity. Without pausing, the march drives on. Horns and trumpets bring the theme even more glaringly to the forefront without adding anything materially new. Over a pedal point on E, the winds flood in mighty waves to the depths until they break off with booming timpani beats on A, accompanied by a snare drum roll. Despite the silence of the other instruments, this is no abatement of strength. The expression, stripped of its tonal character, still intensifies its elemental power, and the tension releases itself like a thunderstorm in rhythms of the two percussion instruments. During this roll and these timpani strokes—Mahler requires two timpanists for its execution—the motto suddenly cuts in:



[Example 6-7: oboes, trumpets, timpani, mm. 59-60]

It is a curious tonal color. Three trumpets and four oboes enter at the same time. The trumpets begin *fortissimo* in major, fading away *pianissimo* to minor, while the oboes, with a doubled middle voice for emphasis of the change, are reversed, growing from *piano* to *fortissimo*. The sound is altered as it rings out; it begins in the metallic, shining character of the trumpets and changes to the transparent, glassy tone of the oboe. The sentence of fate interrupts the strict course of the action. Brass and percussion fall silent. A mystical dusk: soaring half-bar

Winds
espr.

pp
Viol. pizz.

Vcl.
pizz.
pp

8^{va} basso

It is like a secretive further spinning out of the fatalistic major-minor command. Also in these chorale-like harmonic progressions, major and minor are exchanged within each of the first four measures.⁸ After the meditative episode, which interrupts the forward progress as if under the pressure of a crippling message, the song of the second theme in F major confidently enters. “Sweepingly” (“Schwungvoll”), directs Mahler. The diction corresponds to the character of the strings, radiates their gleam and their sensual warmth, and obtains particularly soaring effects from the woodwinds:

a tempo subito
Viol.
Flutes *Schwungvoll*

f < *ff* *sf* *sf* *sf* < *sf* > < *sf* > < *molto cresc* < *fff* >

One thing can certainly not be denied: in the construction of this theme, the idea of the ideal meaning was stronger than the melodic impulse. Accusations have been made against

Mahler because of such themes that are not completely successful in execution, and his creative capabilities have been doubted or even disparaged by making reference to these kinds of weaknesses. There are indisputable weaknesses. They are not, however, weaknesses of creative power. He who could create nine symphonies of such weighty construction could not show his incapacity with one relatively insignificant secondary theme. To a greater extent, a weakness of the Mahlerian creative principle in general is shown here. One looks into Mahler's workshop and one sees how and with which prerequisites he forms themes. The sensual and perceptual appearance of the sound is for him a secondary concern. Of real importance is the meaning of the sound. It emerges from the presentation, and through the presentation, phrases of similar sound and direction can obtain different fundamental interpretations. Mahler thus structures his themes from the conception of their semantic effect, but he does not write symphonies simply because he has usable themes. In general, both the idea of the presentation and thematic individuality were able to come together. These were the creatively pure moments. Occasionally the thematic force was less strong. Then Mahler followed the idea of the presentation alone. His musical sensibility was symbolically idealistic to such a great degree that he would not have been able to apportion such a decisive meaning to the sensual appeal of the sound. Those who heard and interpreted for themselves Mahler's themes that were imperfect in a material sense needed to recognize that they sufficed in their places. Despite this, it would be a futile vindication to deny their openness to attack. Such themes are found in places with a secondary order of importance, and make their most notable appearances in the Sixth and Seventh symphonies. A decreasing power would have necessarily stood out to an increasing degree in the works that followed. But neither the Eighth nor the Ninth symphonies, nor *Das*

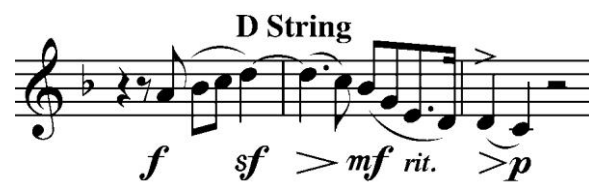
Lied von der Erde warrants such an accusation. One can therefore only establish, here and in other similar episodes yet to be noted, an erroneous low regard of the sonic materials and an overestimating of the presentational effect, [216] too strong an emphasis on intellectually determined formation, and a one-sided disregard of impulsively determined invention. Therein is documented the individuality of Mahler's artistry. It was not divinely perfect, but rather it was conditioned by humanity. It drew its best, innermost strengths from its deep humanity. Only through this was humanity in the natural sense consciously lifted to an object of artistic representation. That which is torn, suffering, or tormented, that which longs for recovery, the powerful stretching of the forces, and the overflowing of passion, all provided the impetus for creation. It therefore needed to reflect the conditions of this deeply human art: its intuitive weaknesses and a power of expression that was occasionally only hinted at and not always capable of objectively pure articulation.⁹

Mahler demands a sweep from the second theme here, the expression of an enthusiastic impulse that presses outward and upward. For this, the simple melody with its somewhat thin intellectual kernel and its short-breathed sequences¹⁰ is exactly right for him. It has the unrelenting drive that continually provides its own momentum, and it has the traits of enthusiasm that the austere first theme lacked and that make this second theme sound like an encouraging, ecstatic march song. The first upswing is followed by a startling holdup, a remembrance of the opening theme in sharp *pizzicati* and short wind rhythms:



[Example 6-10: violins, oboes, clarinets, mm. 91-94]

It is only a slight obstruction. With even more liveliness than before, the F-major theme begins anew. The upper voices of the woodwinds intone it, horns and trumpets accompany with imitative, confirming, encouraging calls, while strings, harps, and celesta play around it with lush, rolling figuration. The song, swelling up, marches and climbs in jubilant ecstasy. It comes to an end in an almost Italianate style, with a broad cadence in which the melody very slowly drips away. The germ phrase of the theme is continually repeated until it softly sinks away in a dreamlike F major:



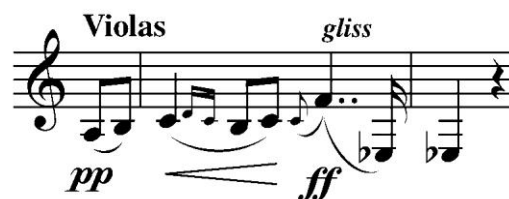
[Example 6-11: first violins, mm. 116-118]

Out of this waning F major, the thrusting opening rhythm, like a call to action, stretches itself out with suddenly swelling force. The introduction rises for the second time, and the developments that have been traversed thus far follow for the second time, as if a single survey had not been urgent enough, or as if the forces had not been enough established for that which is to come.¹¹ Where this will lead has until now been only briefly and incidentally implied. The first and second themes in themselves carry no deep contrasts. They are different and individualized, but in intention and nature they are corresponding manifestations of the same basic will, urging to activity. The one moves forward harshly and defiantly, with grim determination, quickly knocking down obstacles, while the other rides on enthusiastic wings, with a joyful, hopeful swing, storming heedlessly past all hindrances. The two complement each other; the opposition is between them and the fatalistic motto. Until now it had only appeared

after the first execution of the opening theme, but then it was suppressed by the song theme.

The development section that now follows grows out of the idea of this opposition. It is built in four large stages. Each part brings a consolidation and [217] discussion of the important fundamental ideas. It flows into a restatement of the opening that is not a repetition, but instead directs the coming development into new paths through the turn to major.

After the song theme fades away for the second time, the march rhythms of the first theme begin again, this time not urging impetuously, but quietly, almost timidly knocking. Only warmly flickering *sforzati* betray the restrained passions:



[Example 6-12: violas and cellos (with clarinets and bassoons), mm. 126-128]

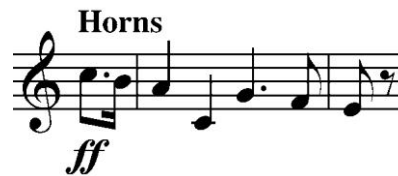
This supplementary phrase to the march motive is a new addition. It alternates with the falling trill motive that had already made previous appearances and now independently comes to the fore:



[Example 6-13: flutes 1 and 2 and oboe 1, mm. 129-130]

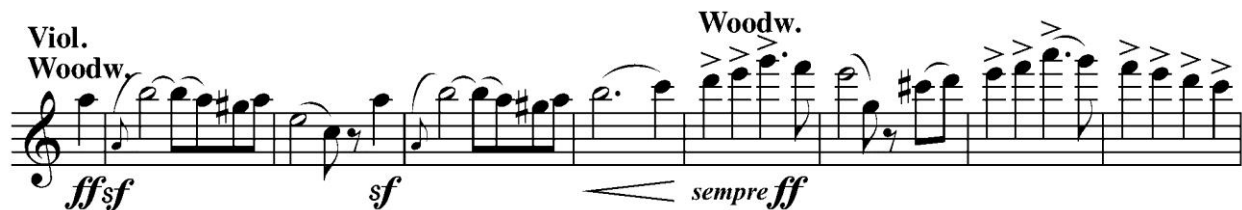
The thematic call, resounding like a signal through the brass, appears as the third member of this

group:



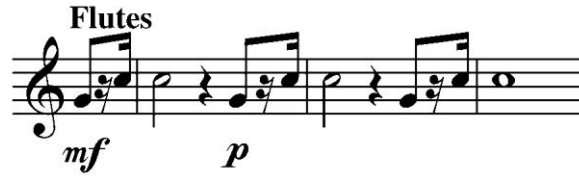
[Example 6-14: horns, mm. 137-139]

Out of the interplay of these three motives arises a vehemently explosive E-minor outbreak of the opening theme. The winds obtain supremacy. Trumpets, horns, and trombones climb sharply upward. In the strings, the march rhythm drives forward, and in the winds, the trill motive sounds, emphasized by the shrill rattle of the xylophone. A new and passionate theme presses forward:



[Example 6-15: violins, flutes, E-flat clarinet, mm. 157-161; flutes, oboes, all clarinets, mm. 161-165]

It is rounded into periods like a song. As an answer, the song theme itself arises from the lower voices to the top, supplemented by sharp march rhythms from the brass and cut by trilled chords from the woodwinds. A violent tempest of all forces, *fortissimo*, suddenly turns to a shimmering *pianissimo* tremolo in the violins. The song theme trails away in the woodwinds. Only celesta and basses, the latter on a mystical low D, continue to play. A bright C major spans above this. Cow bells ring, and in the flutes, a promising C-major call of a fourth:



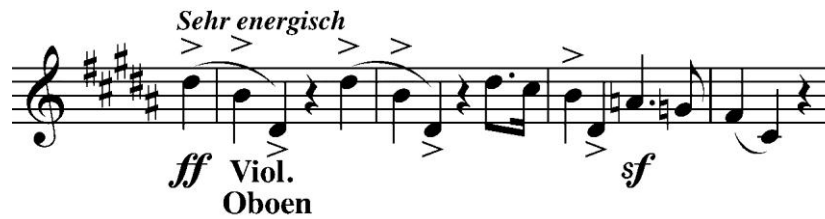
[Example 6-16: flutes, mm. 200-203]

The timpani answer quietly on A and D. The motto sounds dismissively from muted horns, transposed from A to C. As in the exposition, it is supplemented by those chorale-like harmonic progressions. Yet the cowbells continue to sound, as does the fourth. Strings and celesta glide downward in gentle *tremolo* harmonies. The song melody is heard in inversion, transposed to G major, divested of its impetuous sweep, and re-interpreted, “*grazioso*,” as the expression of an idyllic, peaceful mood:



[Example 6-17: 1st flute, oboe, clarinet, mm. 217-222 (with other flutes from m. 220, 2nd oboe from m. 221)]

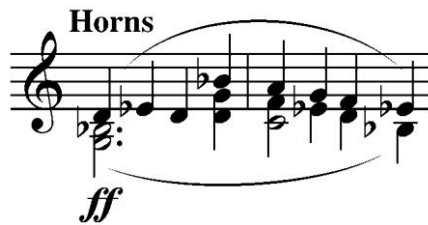
G major changes into a tenderly singing E-flat major. The horn enters in counterpoint to the upward directed violin melody with the theme in its original form. Then again cowbells, the calling fourth, and those mysterious harmonic progressions, portentous of fate, sinking into dreams and forgetting the present. Then, Tempo primo subito, the opening theme flares up “very energetically” (“*sehr energisch*”) in B major:



[Example 6-18: violins and oboes, mm. 250-254]

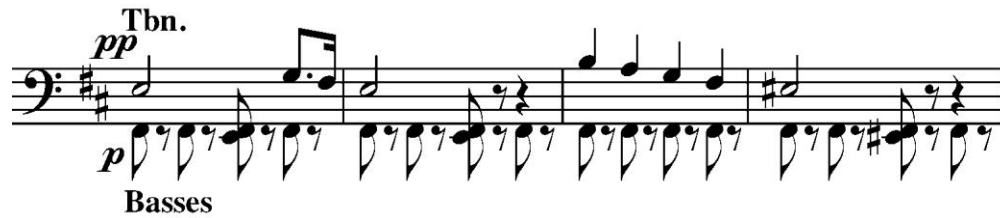
[218] The third part of the development begins.¹² The energy is stretched to the utmost level.

There are no more contrasts. The motive of those portentous chorale harmonies is also carried into the stream and changed to a more urgent song:



[Example 6-19: horns, mm. 271-272]

Everything comes to a climax in an enthusiastic resumption of the initial song of the storm, the opening theme. It is now heard no more in minor. It obtains a confident major sound, a jubilant A major. The first rising idea appears as a symbol of the will to victory. The recapitulation begins in a livelier, richer, and stronger presentation than before. The transition to the second theme also deviates from the earlier one, with accelerated rhythms, decorative figures, and divested of its spectral paralysis. The second theme is now a pure song, transposed from F major to D major, radiant, warm, ringing out with a large and fulfilled tone on the G string of the violins, and fading away with a deep contra-B that is not cut off.¹³ As if in warning, the shadow of the first theme rises in the trombones over a softly throbbing F-sharp in the basses:



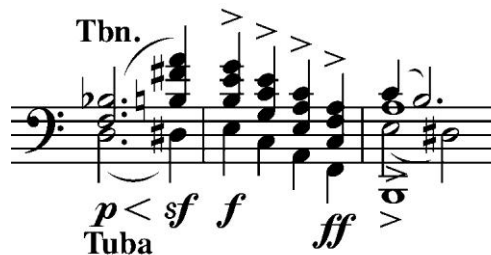
[Example 6-20: trombones, contrabassoon, basses, timpani, mm. 376-379]

Più mosso subito, “pressing forward as if in a rage” (“wie wütend dreinfahrend”), the full orchestra suddenly flares up:



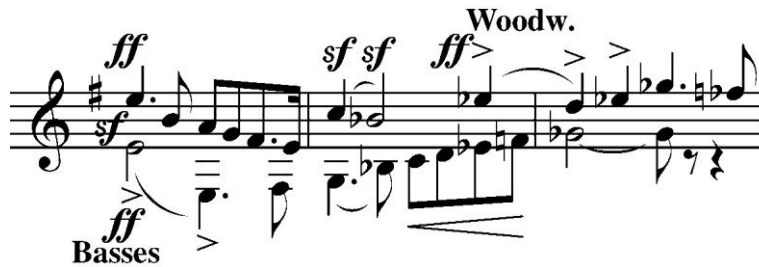
[Example 6-21: first violins (*tremolo* not indicated), bassoons, bass clarinet, trombone 3, with partial doubling from four horns, trombones 1 and 2, and tuba, mm. 382-385]

From the basses, the song theme presses urgently upward, and the fanfare motives of the first theme are heard from the winds. Tempestuous, broadly expansive chords, which then plunge down again, cry out from the trombones:



[Example 6-22: trombones, tuba, clarinets, bassoons, mm. 407-409; violins, m. 409]¹⁴

The first theme is combined with the inversion of the second:



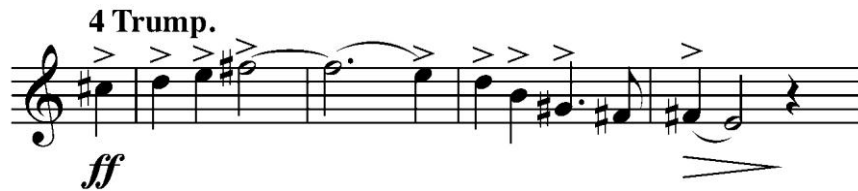
[Example 6-23: oboes, cellos, basses, mm. 410-412; violins, mm. 410-411, clarinets, mm. 411-412]

The themes and rhythms push into each other ever more closely, and sharp march chords sound “roughly” (“roh”) from the trombones. The physical strength of the tone production climbs to the highest level as strings and flutes disappear entirely. Only brass and the sharply piercing woodwind register, with the E-flat clarinet, rage forth in chopping rhythms. Out of this confusion of harmonies, a pure C major breaks through from the trumpet. Horn fanfares confirm it and a C-major *tremolo* shimmers in the celesta and second violins, while the first theme is heard from the first violins, also in plain C-major:



[Example 6-24: trumpets, mm. 428-432; horns, mm. 429-432; second violins and celesta, mm. 429-430]¹⁵

C major shifts directly to D-flat major. The song theme swells mightily in the brass choir. Over rolling fourths from the timpani, it is heard in a hymn-like augmentation, coming from the trumpets like a song of triumph: [219]



[Example 6-25: trumpets, mm. 444-448]

The path from the A-minor opening to the A-major summit has been found. A mighty stream of joy pours out. The fourths in the timpani and basses roll forth until the end. The chorale solemnly sounds from the trombones. The song theme broadens more and more into a song of victory whose individual motives, resoundingly exchanged by all the voices, now proudly commanding, now joyfully soaring, are brought together in a turbulent closing chorus of jubilation.

The usual meaning of the movements within the symphony appears to be reversed here. The first movement brings upswing and triumph, the last breakdown and catastrophe. Regardless of this inversion of the usual constructive type, Mahler rarely ever held himself so strictly to the formal scheme as in this piece. With the repeat of the exposition, the precisely planned development, the carefully worked-out reprise, and the large-scale coda, it could be taken as a textbook example of symphonic sonata construction.¹⁶ These formal relationships to the old-style symphony are certainly of a mainly external nature. The placement of the sections toward each other, their meaning for the continuation of the symphonic action, and the constantly rising line of ideas and their presentation all differ substantially from the layout of the older symphony, which only built up to the development, and whose second part was mostly recapitulation. Most meaningful for Mahler in this respect is the coda. With the C-major turn of the trumpets and horns, it brings the verdict and determines the ending of the movement.¹⁷ The

motto itself comes forward characteristically, but not really decisively. Its significance is restrained to that of a preliminary announcement, and in its opposition to the themes, it works more passively than as a directly intervening force. In the course of the movement, then, the symbolism of the motto is not clarified, and the basic idea of the tragic, the powerful depression from courageous major down to the gloomy minor mood, is not confirmed, but rather disputed. In reality, this opening movement does not touch at all on the fundamental problem of the work: on the battle with matter, with the blind power of destiny, and with the opposition of the world. What it should and does bring is the consolidation of individual strength, which later on must take up the fight with the elemental powers. These appear here only as premonitions, as a strengthening challenge. The purpose of the first movement is to bring about this strengthening. The triumphant mood in which it ends is the jubilation of a personality that has come to itself, climbed to the heights and become freed from everyday life, no more, no less. The assignment of the two following middle movements is to further effect this consolidation. Combined with the first, they form the prelude or the first part of the tragic plot that comes to its conclusion in the Finale.

Originally the Scherzo followed the first movement, and the Andante came after it as the third. Mahler later reversed the order that still stands in the score today, and placed the Andante in second position.¹⁸ The reasons for this [220] are not known. Perhaps Mahler was concerned with giving the lively, agitated opening movement a sharper contrast through the Andante than was offered by the Scherzo. In any case, the exchange shows that a progressive action within the middle movements is not expressed. The Andante and Scherzo are free, fantasy-like

supplements to the opening movement. Its victorious, joyous ending provides their basis. The Andante moderato in E-flat major begins “tenderly but expressively” (“zart aber ausdrucksvoll”) with a melody in songlike fashion. Like the song theme of the first movement, it does not count among the most strongly inspired demonstrations of the Mahlerian spirit. The opening, with a languishing rise of a sixth, has an almost ironically popular quality. Only the surprising turn to minor in the first and third measures gives the melody a more original feature, and this then seeks to establish itself in a conclusion with modulations that seem somewhat convoluted and forced. One could presume that Mahler himself did not find any pure joy in this theme. It is striking that he allows it to step back and gradually disappear within the movement while the whole picture unfolds ever more marvelously as one that becomes alienated from worldly matters and strives upward toward distant dream worlds. Or is it perhaps intentional that the first melody is given a particular worldly tone in order to make the forgetting of everything that is bound to the earth and its substance more distinctly noticeable later on?¹⁹ The violins sing thus:



[Example 6-26: first violins, upbeat to m. 1-m. 7, with flute doubling in mm. 5-7]

The violin song falters here, as if it no longer finds itself at ease in the somewhat tormented, probing chromatic line. In continuation, the winds lead back to E-flat major with a rocking

eighth-note motive that meaningfully steps forward:



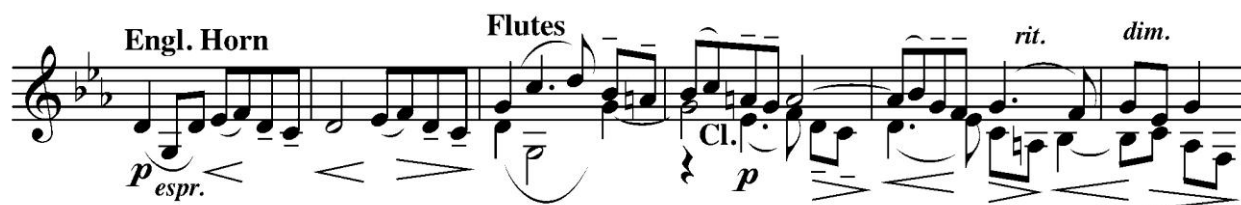
[Example 6-27: oboe, mm. 7-9]²⁰

The violins now add a closing phrase in which the rocking motive is widened to a cajoling sixth:



[Example 6-28: first violins, mm. 10-16; second violins, mm. 13-16, with some clarinet doubling]

It spins itself dreamily further, moving from low clarinets and violas to the flutes, which are divided into four parts and trade voices in pairs. Under this, the English horn sings a melancholy minor-key tune:



[Example 6-29: English horn, mm. 22-25; flute and clarinet 1, mm. 24-27; clarinet 2, mm. 25-27]

The minor mood, however, is not yet capable of establishing itself, and merely drifts dreamily through the voices. The major melody of the opening arises anew in the horn, freely paraphrasing the original line. The first bars remain quite simple: strings without first violins accompany in peaceful, muted harmonies, and only the harps provide rhythmic broken chords. The second half of the melody blooms up with unusual warmth of orchestral sound and concludes with a long, lovingly executed cadence with tenderly entwining [221] motives. E-flat major sinks away, and the secretive sound of a string harmonic on G leads into other spheres. The previous motives continue to be heard, but the character of their sound, and with it their expressive value, is transformed. The solemn isolation of E-flat major has vanished, and the new E-minor color provides a curiously tense, expectant mood. Suddenly, the minor-key veil is lifted. A radiant E major shines out: undulating triplets in the string basses, upward swelling harmonies in harp and woodwinds, and over them luminous, solemn horn chords and the rocking motive in the trumpets:



[Example 6-30: 6 horns and trumpet, mm. 85-90; flutes and oboes, mm. 89-90]

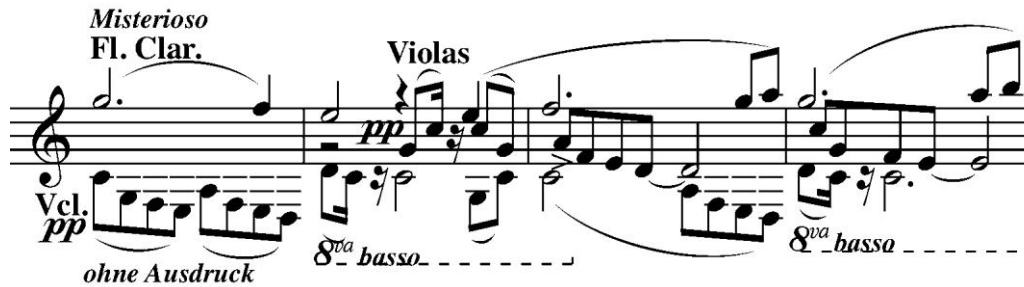
It is a moment that is vividly reminiscent of the E-major breakthrough in the slow movement of the Fourth Symphony, to which it has an actual internal relationship. As it was there and in the Finale of the Fourth, E major is the key of transfiguration, the expression of rapture, the vision of the otherworldly.²¹ The world is distant, and the idea of eternity opens heaven to the solitary

one. The sound of the cowbells, the last call from the sinking world, becomes ever weaker. The promising sounds of the horns climb higher, as if they wish to continue proclaiming more and clearer things from distant worlds. Yet it is only a vision. The gleam is extinguished again as the view and the senses slowly turn back to the earth. The opening melody sounds again in E-flat major, distributed to the woodwinds, then the horn. An intimate counterpoint in the violins spreads itself over this, striving sweepingly to the heights, but with the gradual dying away of the melody it likewise loses itself in the depths:

The image shows a musical score for Example 6-31. It features five staves: Violins (Viol.), Flutes (Flutes), Oboe (Oboe), Horn (Horn), and Woodwinds (Woodw.). The Violins and Flutes parts are marked with *pp* (pianissimo). The Oboe part is marked with *p* and *rit.* (ritardando). The Horn part is marked with *p espr.* (piano with expression). The Woodwinds part is marked with *f* (forte) and *p espr.* (piano with expression). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

[Example 6-31: oboe and clarinet, mm. 99-100; first violins, mm. 100-105; flute, mm. 100-103; horn, mm. 101-104; bassoon, mm. 100-103; flute, oboe, and clarinet, m. 105]

A second secretive turn is born from the E-flat-major conclusion. Again through the string harmonic on G, but this time underlain by tenderly modulating harmonies, a change to C major is now carried out. Flutes and clarinets, “Misterioso,” intone something like an echo or a continuation of the last countermelody, while fragments of the opening theme in the bass voices, dreamy and “without expression” (“ohne Ausdruck”), seem like distant memories:



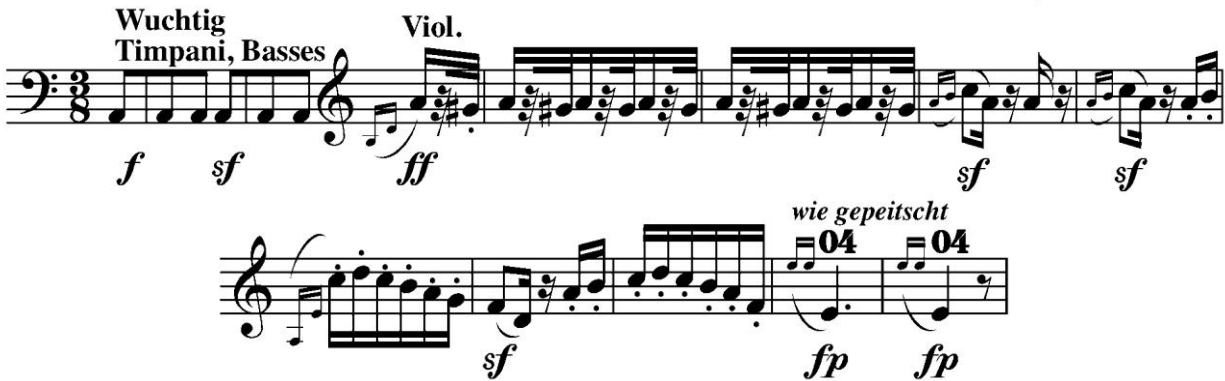
[Example 6-32: flute 1, clarinet 1, violas, cellos, mm. 115-118]

The dream spins itself further toward A major. The rocking motive is heard in the first horn, and flutes and violins cover it with atmospheric sounds that lose themselves “like a breath” (“wie ein Hauch”) in the ether. The melancholy minor tune of the English horn from the opening of the movement softly enters, now given to the oboe. All senses are sharpened to the highest degree, the stillness appears to become tone and sound, and no more earthly noise can be heard. Here now the melancholy tune once again breaks forth, given to horns, bassoons, violas, and cellos, and becoming passionately agitated. Is it the opposition between the celestial clarity in that peace of distant worlds and the [222] unsatisfied lament of one’s own that leads to the elemental explosion and the almost overpowering evocation of this minor-key manifestation? Is it an attempt to draw it over into the pure sphere of E major? The cowbells ring out, and the opening melody thrusts forth out of the depths in a mighty upward sweep from basses, bassoons, and tuba, then violas and cellos attempt to take it further. The sumptuously beautiful countermelody of the violins spreads itself above with wide bowing, and the full orchestra resounds with the highest intensity, “always with moving feeling, swelling up and down” (“immer mit bewegter Empfindung, auf- und abwogend”). The atmospheric E major does not grow to this fullness of life and strength, as it falls back to E-flat major. The sound floods into the movement of inner

life which can only again be awakened by the contemplation of transcendent revelations. The opening melody does not return again. It has disappeared, as if absorbed by the power of the melodic manifestations that now unfold. The rocking motive here comes meaningfully to the forefront. The stream of sound gradually abates, losing itself in individual lingering, singing, calling, echoing voices. Becoming ever slower and dimmer, it concludes in the dying notes of the flute and muted horns, blurring tenderly like the fading twilight afterglow.

As in the Fifth, it would also not be difficult to invent a programmatic interpretation of the Sixth Symphony. The intensifying structure of the first movement and the visionary sweep of the second, which lead to the catastrophic release of an impetuous fighting mood in the Finale, all give manifold clues to such an interpretation. The Scherzo, the third movement in the new ordering, could also easily be classified in such a poetic plot. One could think of a dance of elemental spirits and primeval creatures that can be perceived by the lonely wanderer in the heights far above the earth. Or one could interpret the whole as a picture of times of the day, sketched in huge outlines: morning, midday, dusk, and night, whereby the Scherzo would represent the fantastic activity of the twilight specters. These or similar such interpretations are in no way to be fundamentally dismissed, as long as they are not forcefully followed through on every point or indeed taken as authoritative explanations. Absolutely nothing can be explained by them. They only somewhat strengthen the impact of those things in the music that stimulate the imagination.²² With Mahler, conditions for such stimulation are always given, not only through the musical expression, but also through the vividness of his performance directions. If one were to summarize these utterances, however, one would see that they are substantial enough

in themselves that a further subjective interpretation with conceptual programmatic ideas is superfluous. This is also true of the Scherzo of the A-minor symphony. It joins itself to the sequence of those typical Mahlerian scherzo movements that lead from the Fish Sermon of the Second through the animal piece of the Third and the Dance of Death in the Fourth, and further to the spectral piece in the Seventh up through the grotesquerie of the Ninth. This is the basic type of Mahlerian scherzo. They are consistently movements of demonic and fantastic character, usually not vibrant and quick in rhythm, as in Beethoven's and Bruckner's scherzos, but more likely heavy or massive, emphasizing the burdensome weight and earthbound nature of the rhythm. [223] The Scherzo of the Fifth, full of worldly, joyful power, stands with the peasant dance of the First as the exceptional appearance among these pictures of somber fantasy.²³ The Scherzo of the Sixth also begins in an almost threatening manner. "Wuchtig" ("Heavy") is the indication of the heading, "beat three eighth notes without dragging" ("drei Achtel ausschlagen ohne zu schleppen"). The sharply accented rhythmic value of each eighth note should be preserved. The timpani alone beats out a firm eighth-note upbeat, then string basses and cellos follow "*forte, martellato*" with a beat for each bowing. Then the violins, violas and horns intone the sharply contoured theme. With tenacious persistence, it holds onto the incorrigible upbeat in the first two measures. The third measure brings a resolution of the melodic line that is still heavy, even somewhat bulky and burdensome:



[Example 6-33: timpani, cellos, and basses, upbeat to m. 1-m. 2; first violins, mm. 2-11 (joined by second violins, mm. 6-11 and violas, mm. 6-9)]

“As if whipped” (“wie gepeitscht”), demands Mahler of the two closing measures in the violins.

The expression of a dark wildness, forced into inflexible rhythmic bonds, is established right from the beginning of the movement, and followed through without heed to the sound.

Trombones and tuba thrust downward in hard crashing sixteenth-note first inversion chords:



[Example 6-34: trombones and tuba, mm. 12-13]²⁴

The upper voices rush upward, whistling shrilly:



[Example 6-35: flutes, piccolos, oboes, clarinets, mm. 11-13]

The plunging trill motive from the first movement is heard:



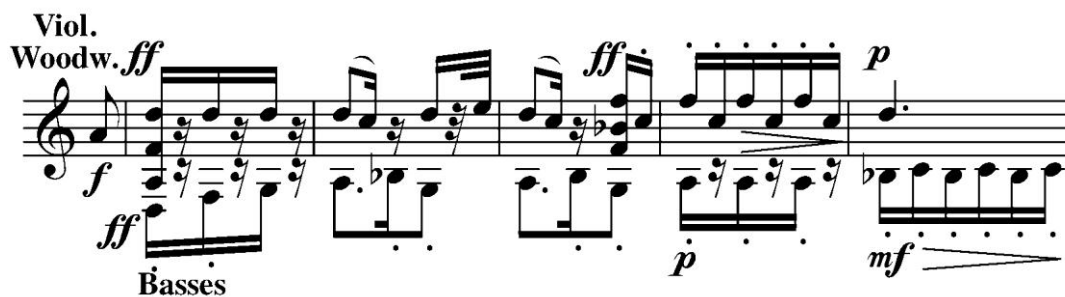
[Example 6-36: first violins (flutes, piccolo, E-flat clarinet), mm. 15-19]

In an inexorable sequence, the clumsy dance rhythm pushes further. A winding chromatic sequence of harmonies from stopped horns and trumpets seeks to reach new harmonic paths:



[Example 6-37: stopped horns mm. 26-33]²⁵

The dance turns from A minor to F major, where follows a dance tune of similar strength to the first, but less gloomy:



[Example 6-38: first violins, cellos, basses (flute, oboe), mm. 41-46]

It solidifies itself in the woodwind choir, through an alternation of triple and quadruple meter, to

a self-willed rhythmic line:



[Example 6-39: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 50-55]

Yet this theme, whose melody has already been somewhat cultivated, passes fleetingly by. The tougher natural strength of the first theme presses impetuously upward, shoves the new melodic impulses to the side, and pushes through with the greatest effort of sonic energy. Downward sliding first-inversion chords from trombones and horns interrupt the rhythmic pounding: [224]



[Example 6-40: horns, trombones, mm. 79-83]

Suddenly, for the first time since the opening movement, in the *fortissimo* of the trumpets, the motto is heard. The upper voices crash downward, and everything is gathered in a softly fading A minor. With a light swell of the woodwinds, the picture is changed. A new tune enters “thoughtfully” (“bedächtig”). It displays the features of the second dance theme. Before, it had not been able to hold itself against the overpowering force. Now it appears more graceful, is extremely simply scored, and brings a surprisingly teasing tone into the whole. Mahler himself emphasized the contrast with the performance indication. “Old-fashioned, *grazioso*”

(“Altväterisch, *grazioso*”), he directs.²⁶ An idyll arises out of the darkly rhythmic, elemental world, unforeseen and unexpected. The alternation of meters gives the delicate, refined melody something like the character of a miniature:

Altväterisch. Grazioso.

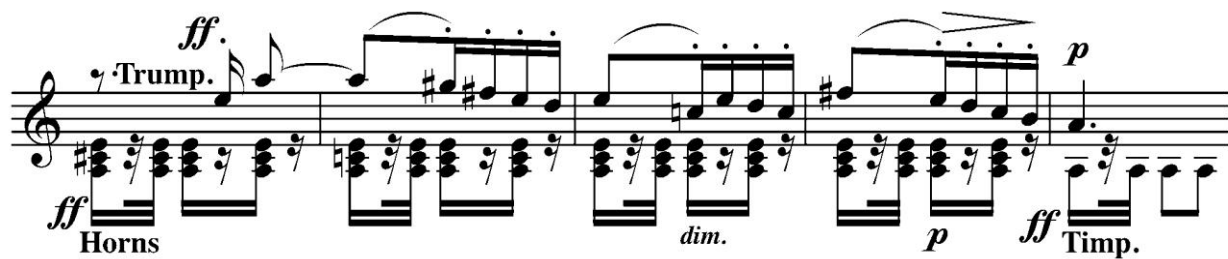
[Example 6-41: oboe, mm. 96-103]

A sonic contrast is also emphasized. In place of the full orchestra, the different choirs enter in a charming alternation. Woodwinds begin with the dance tune, and the strings take it over from them. The first theme thumps into the middle of this before it is appeased and held back. The “altväterisch” music again prances solemnly forward, makes its cleanly executed *pas*,²⁷ is again suppressed by the more robust theme, and finally asserts itself. A delicate game thus arises between graceful and coarsely primeval elements. Until the dance motive is pulled to the depths and the original power comes forth out of it in firm and vigorous timpani beats. But it does not yet reach a breakthrough. Chromatically descending wind chords lead, “becoming slower” (“langsamer werdend”), into an F minor that is almost like a funeral march:



[Example 6-42: oboes, clarinet 1, piccolo, flutes, mm. 182-188; violins, violas, bassoons, mm. 183-184]

Only coming out of this intermezzo, which is given a ghostly color by the muting of trumpets and horns and by the *col legno* striking of the strings, does the Scherzo theme powerfully break forth again. It is developed in a similar manner as before, but is executed with still sharper color and thematic cut, and with richer dynamic contrasts. The motto, mediating between both dance themes and assigned to horns and trombones this time, is also released from the stiff chord progression into a rhythmic motion, and is drowned out by a trenchant trumpet signal:



[Example 6-43: trumpet, mm. 261-265; horns, mm. 261-264, timpani, m. 265]

The “altväterisch”²⁸ round dance is kept almost more idyllic than before. It is now heard in D major, spun out delicately and antiphonally, a graceful play of contrasts that intrude upon the

imagination like the remembrance of solitude in an earlier world. The funeral march-like intermezzo [225] follows, colored even more darkly. Beginning in E-flat minor, it pushes back to A minor, as if the opening were to start a third time. But how would it go further? Is this not all only dream, remembrance of the world while far from the world, the twilight between consciousness and unconsciousness? A sudden start, a shrill cry of awakening that is similar to the conclusion of the “Fishpredigt” Scherzo. “Shrill, bell in the air” (“Grell, Schalltrichter auf”) sounds the distorted dance motive from four oboes, plunging to the deep:



[Example 6-44: oboes, mm. 401-406]²⁹

As if the apparitions have suddenly vanished, everything sinks into darkness. In the depths, timpani and bass drum softly pound the eighth-note rhythms of the opening. Individual motives, disjointed and internally disconnected, now sound from various voices. Nothing more can hold onto itself. Imperiously cutting in, the motto of fate sounds from the trumpets, sinking from A to G and from G to F in a slow *decrescendo*:



[Example 6-45: muted trumpets, mm. 420-429]

Stopped horns and finally muted trombones take it up. Here and there one of the ghosts of the dance still peers out. It is banished by the relentless command of the winds, which retain

leadership until the end. Ever closer and more sinister, the atmosphere closes in on itself. Contrabassoon and timpani venture a last reminiscence of the dance rhythms. Then the whole thing fades away on a dark A-minor chord of the bassoons.

Perhaps it was the meaningful emergence of the motto in the Scherzo that moved Mahler to remove this movement from the original second position to the third, thus providing an immediate preparation for the Finale.³⁰ After the Scherzo, which fades away in sinister, tense darkness, the breakout of the Finale's opening is like a release. It brings the development, which until now has only been implied, to an acute crisis. It uncovers conflicts that until now have been threatening and lurking, and yet remained intangible under the surface. What is the will of the motto, which has certainly been meaningful, yet has intervened in the course of the development without any actual active force of its own? Three symphonic movements have been traversed, pieces with many grand and many graceful details. It cannot yet be seen, however, where the path should lead. Problems are implied, but not yet clearly established. Everything to this point was a preparation in the higher sense. The formal as well as the intellectual musical tension has been raised to the highest level. Now the resolution explosively bursts forth.

The Finale of the Sixth Symphony is, after that of the Eighth, the largest that Mahler wrote.³¹ It is not only the richest in content. The measure count alone could not be decisive, although it bespeaks the will that is directed into a powerful expanse. What gives this Finale its exceptional position is the power of the formal control, the unity into which the most varied moods and conflicts are captured as a totality. [226] Mahler had actually always written grandly

conceived finales with monumental expression. Even in those instances where his final movements stand behind other movements of the same symphony in extent and seeming weightiness of content, as in the Third, Fourth, or Ninth, they are really the spiritual points of resolution. Only a special type of problem determines the apparent subservience of the finale. In other works, the Fifth and the Seventh, Mahler created finales in which all of the forces at work in the preceding movements shine out in the greatest brilliance. Plowing through had already occurred and the matter had been intellectually and formally clarified. He could therefore build these finales in grandly rising, unified lines. Mahler found both finale types—the externally receding one that is internally the strongest, and the crowning one that shines in luxuriant splendor—only in the course of his development. In the beginning he envisioned a third type: the finale in which the main ideas of the work reach a breakthrough for the first time, leading there to a decisive confrontation. This is the finale type that Mahler uses in the First Symphony, but he is not yet able to internally grasp it and round it off. Then he sets this type of finale aside for a while and forms his concluding movements from other basic patterns. He creates in the Second a programmatically motivated fantasia, in the Third and Fourth two unusual movements of that intensive type. In the Fifth, he structures a consummate artistic masterpiece in the brilliant style, if this description can be used to characterize the differences. Now, after this testing and strengthening of his ability, he again picks up on the oldest kind of finale problem, which he had not attempted again since the First Symphony. He builds a finale that still carries in itself the chaos of the whole work and only now makes order out of it. And now he succeeds at that which in the First Symphony could only be seen as fulfilled through the strong influence of external resources: the summation of all the conflicting elements into a complete work of grandiose unity

in purpose, of a logical consistency in construction that could only be created by a master of architectonic structure.³² In order to understand the effect of such a massively towering movement, other performance conditions are required than are offered by today's concert hall. One must obtain a wide view and a distance with regard to such a colossus. Only then are its acoustic as well as its formal proportions—they both determine each other—recognizable. If this is more or less valid for all of Mahler's works, it particularly applies to the three instrumental symphonies, and among them it particularly applies to the Sixth. Perhaps therein a reason also lies for its unpopularity. The characteristic aspect of monumentality in Mahler's nature has become in these works, especially in the Sixth, and particularly here in the Finale, the actual determining and basic formal idea.

Rondo, variation, and even fugue were not considered as a formal scheme. Mahler applies that form to the movement which is most likely to offer room for the inclusion of a diverse and developing content: the sonata form. It is divided into first and second themes, development, recapitulation, and coda, and it places a mighty *sostenuto* introduction before the actual presentation of the themes. To make the architecture of such a movement clear would require still more [227] means than were offered by the sonata scheme. It was not only necessary to set off the individual parts thematically and dynamically. Caesuras needed to be created that, like giant stakes as it were, would allow the larger levels of construction to emerge from a great distance. Mahler invents a device through which he is able to create an intellectual, dynamic, and formal organization, and at the same time architectonically control the overflowing wealth of material. This device is the hammer.³³ Its symbolic meaning was already discussed. Its use, however, is not limited to symbolic fulfillment. It serves at the same time still other

purposes of large formal delineation, and thus emerges from intellectual, sonic, and formal necessity. The hammer blow sounds three times. The first time is after the conclusion of the exposition, immediately before the beginning of the development. The second time is at the conclusion of the development, shortly before the recapitulation of the main material. The third time is at the conclusion of the reprise before the coda. The first two hammer blows therefore, in formal consideration, define the development, while the third concludes the recapitulation and leads into the coda. With that, three important breaks are created. They identify the development of the form. The dynamics also obtain their last intensification through these three hammer blows. According to Mahler's intentions, the dynamics here outdo the sonic power of the heavy brass, and represent the highest possible physical power within the capabilities of orchestral expression, creating tonal high points within the undulating flood of sound. The use of the hammer thus results from organic needs of various kinds. They are all rooted in the requirements of the formal intentions, which here urge an expression. The threefold equality of this last rhythmic and sonic means of intensification, however, gives to the whole the cohesion of a complete appearance.³⁴

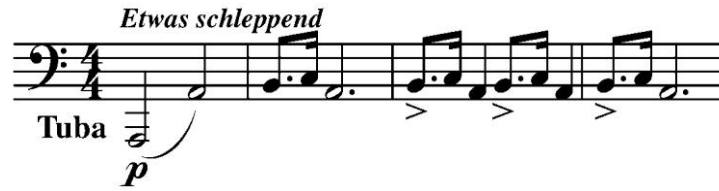
The introduction, *Sostenuto*, comprising 114 measures, and therefore twice as long as the introduction to the First Symphony, begins with a darkly murmuring altered four-three chord above C in a strange, dusky coloration: a held low C, *piano*, from the horns, contrabasses, and contrabassoon, a hard snapped *pizzicato* beat from the cellos, and *fortissimo* upward gliding harp harmonies. To this are added in the second half of the measure bassoons and D clarinet *piano*, flutes, B-flat clarinets, and muted strings *forte*, and oboes *pianissimo*. Sound mixtures with this almost whimsical and arbitrary terracing can be found often in Mahler's later scores. They may

appear to be exaggeratedly nuanced, but they show how carefully Mahler considered the importance of the sound colors against each other. The individual instrument gradually loses all of its own importance and becomes merely a means of expressive orchestral technique. Over this harmony, swelling as if in a muffled glow, a wide ranging violin phrase spreads itself, boldly rising in the first part and inexorably falling in the second part. The motto is heard from the winds in an accompanying role. The major chord sounds *fortissimo* in the brass, changing with the entrance of flutes and bassoons into a minor that floats away:

The image displays a musical score for Example 6-46, featuring four staves. The top staff is for Basses, marked 'Sostenuto' and 'Basses', with dynamics *p*, *f*, and *dim.*. The second staff is for the first violins, marked '1. Viol.', with dynamics *f* and *dim.*. The third staff is for Horns and Tubas, marked 'Horns Tbn.', with dynamics *ff*, *p*, *ppp*, *ff*, *f*, and *mf*. The fourth staff is for Violins, marked 'Vcl.', with dynamics *ff* and *f*. The score includes various articulation marks such as accents, slurs, and dynamic markings.

[Example 6-46: basses, m. 1; horns and winds, mm. 1-2, first violins, mm. 3-8; full orchestra (except percussion and harp), mm. 9-12; cellos, mm. 13-15]

[228] During a muffled roll of the bass drum, the string basses heavily heave downward, climbing down to a low A. The meter is changed. Broad half notes become “somewhat dragging” (“etwas schleppend”) quarter notes. The first onslaught has passed, and stillness enters. Only the drum roll continues to sound. A tuba motive arises from it, so to speak, eerily stretching itself to an octave and there asserting itself with stubborn repetition:



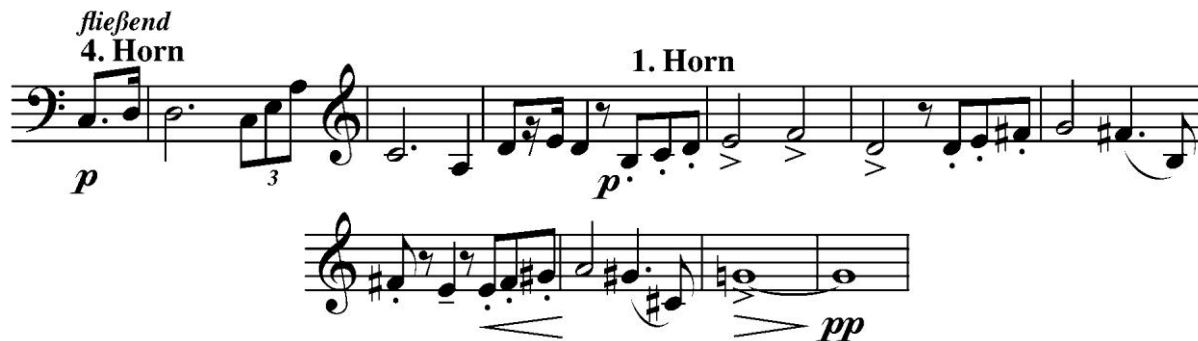
[Example 6-47: tuba, mm. 16-19]

It is reminiscent of the main theme of the first movement. It is related to it in the octave jump as well as the upbeat rhythm. There the octave fell, here it rises. The dotted rhythm is similarly inverted in pitch direction and changed from an upbeat to the downbeat of a full measure. A second reminiscence is awakened, this time of the Scherzo at the ascending 32nd-note motive of the clarinets:



[Example 6-48: clarinets, mm. 19-20]

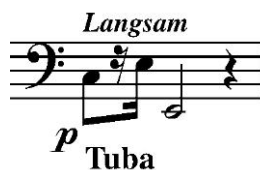
It is a dreamlike life of memories without any clearly tangible appearances. The cowbells sound.³⁵ In the horn, tied directly to the upbeat motive of the tuba, a boldly intruding major-key idea arises in confident rhythms:



[6-49: 4th horn, mm. 30-33; 1st horn, mm. 33-40]

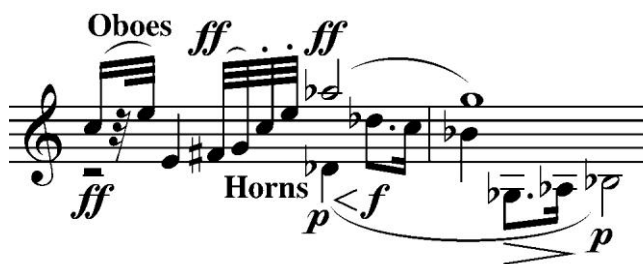
It is not successful in finding a firm tonality. It fades away without closure. “Again dragging” (“Wieder schleppend”), the oppressive dream mood enters with incoherent violin *tremolos*.

“Slowly” (“Langsam”), the ponderous tuba motive sounds out:



[Example 6-50: tuba, m. 41]

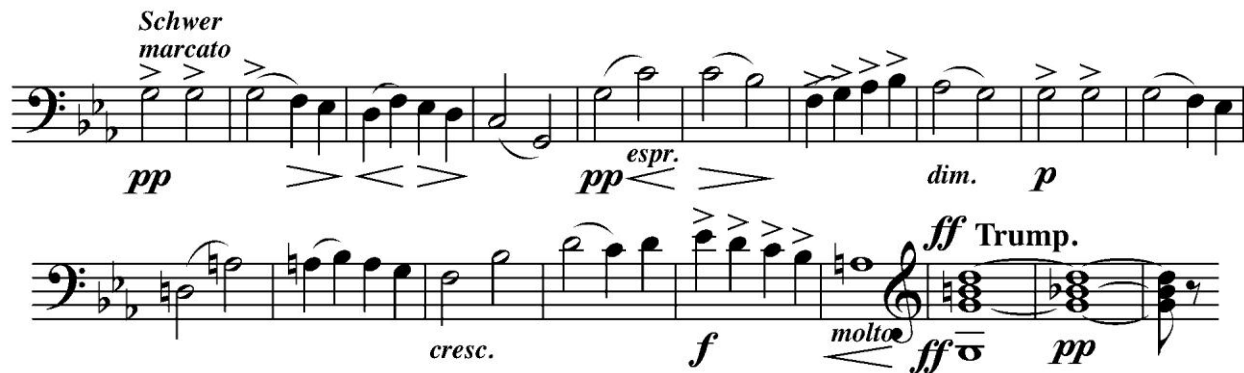
Oboes repeat it more vehemently, briefly ascending, and at the same time the octave motive sounds from the horn in a pathetic transformation:



[Example 6-51: oboes, horns, piccolo, mm. 42-43]

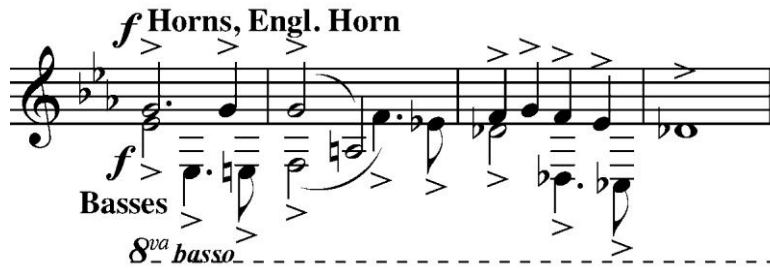
The picture becomes more and more bleak. The last motives mesh more tightly into each other.

In between, heavy beats of the bass drum are heard with increasing frequency. The fantastic confusion condenses itself into a “heavy, *marcato*” (“schwer, markato”)³⁶ striding chorale tune that sounds like a dirge. All strings are silent. Only the wind choir—deep woodwinds, horns, and tuba without trombones and trumpets—marches in solemn measure, like a funeral band that comes gradually closer in constant steps, and blows out its song:



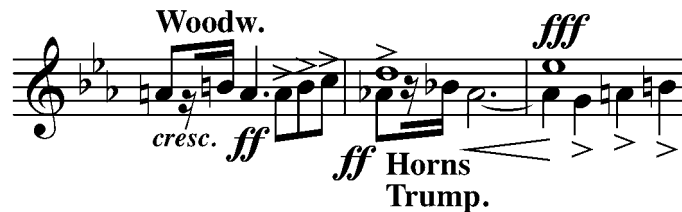
[Example 6-52: top voice of wind choir (clarinets, horns, bassoons), mm. 49-64; trumpets (with tuba), mm. 65-67]

The conclusion attempts to reach G major out of the gloomy C minor of the beginning. Then the trumpets cut in violently with the motto of fate. G major flares up like lightning over massive timpani beats, and then quickly fades to G minor. Again the dream mood. A confused chaos of aimless, searching ideas. *Tremolos* of muted strings, while individual woodwinds and [229] horn make futile attempts to grasp once again the rhythmically firm horn theme and to lead it further. Livelier than before, *forte*, “gradually building to the next tempo” (“allmählich zum nächsten Tempo steigern”), the chorale once again, supplemented by the likewise strengthening octave motive:



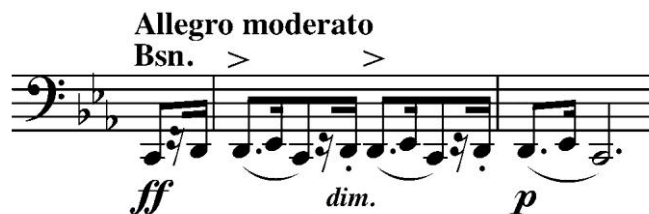
[Example 6-53: horns 1 and 2, English horn, mm. 82-85; cellos, basses, bass clarinet, bassoons, mm. 82-84]

A sharply onrushing buildup is set in motion, climaxing on the major-key motive of the horn:



[Example 6-54: oboes (with clarinet doubling), trumpets; mm. 93-95, horns, English horn, mm. 94-95]

It unloads itself onto C major–C minor, the always returning motto of fate that turns every major-key upswing into the gloom of minor. Now it churns itself up with passionate ferocity, *Allegro moderato*. The dotted rhythm of the tuba theme becomes the seed of an *Allegro* motive:



[Example 6-55: bassoons and cellos, mm. 97-99]

Here again is one of Mahler's characteristic sound mixtures: bassoons blow *fortissimo* while cellos back them up *piano*. An agitated, upward flying string motive answers:



[Example 6-56: violas, mm. 99-101; first violins, m. 101]³⁷

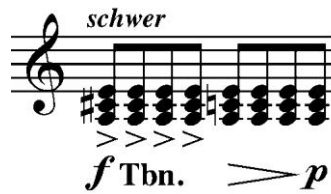
The tempo drives forward, motives and rhythms become shorter, and the harmonies push themselves from C minor to A minor. The storm breaks out:

Viol. Allegro energico
Woodw. G String

[Example 6-57: oboes and first violins (with some doubling of English horn, clarinets and second violins), mm. 113-121]

As in the earlier large symphonic movements, Mahler here also does not set up a single, solidly closed theme, but rather a multi-part theme group. The first is this robust, impulsive A-minor theme with a bold closing turn to E major. It is almost hurled out, with the upper voices of the woodwinds *fortissimo* and both groups of violins in triple *forte*, storming on the G string. From A minor to D minor, then back to the opening key, it rages onward with no abatement of strength, without change of dynamics, defiantly and insistently asserting itself, always circling around tonic and dominant, hammering strongly upon them. Even the motto of destiny, which is inserted into the first large A-minor cadence, is incapable of hindering the impetuosity, and is

itself taken by it. The otherwise unmoving, firmly rooted harmonies are seemingly shaken by the thrusting force of the theme and broken into heavily staggering eighth notes:



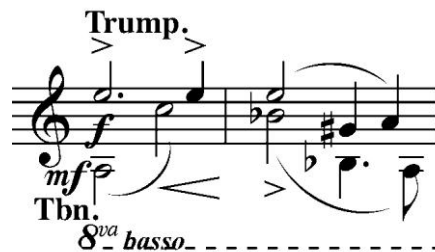
[Example 6-58: trombones, m. 139]

But a change does not occur. The theme churns further in the basses. Over it, a new theme sounds out, making reference to the octave motive in line and to the chorale in declamation:

[Example 6-59: horns, flutes, oboes, mm. 141-144; flutes, oboes, 5th trumpet, mm. 145-148; 1st trumpet, flute, mm. 149-150; flutes, oboes, clarinets, first violins, mm. 151-157]

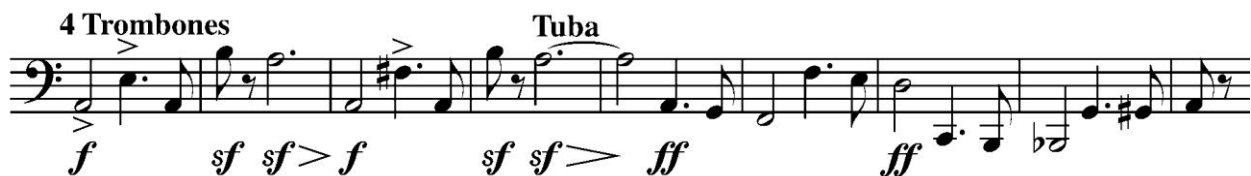
Brazenly stepping out in constant rhythms and powerful intervals, it is taken up in alternation from the various groups of instruments. [230] Horns begin, woodwinds continue, trumpets, woodwinds, and strings follow again, each with a few measures, always calling to the others, until they all come together with a mighty swing at the hymnal turn to C major. Even now, a concluding fate motto does not lead to a change. The motives of the first group continue and

combine with one another:



[Example 6:60: trumpet 1, (with oboes, clarinets, violas), trombones and tuba (with contrabassoon), mm. 160-161]

The half-measure notes and dotted march rhythms, at first moving steadily, are carried away by the sixteenth-note upbeat of the theme's beginning into a flooding wave of intensification. The conclusion of the theme resounds powerfully from four trombones and the tuba:



[Example 6-61: trombones and tuba, mm. 180-188; bass clarinet, bassoons, contrabassoon, mm. 184-188]

Now a sudden change. Out of the storming A minor blossoms a calm, warmly shining D major.

Under vibrating eighth-note triplets in the flutes and clarinets, the horn has a joyful promise: the major-key idea of the introduction, now consolidated into a second theme, rising in a proud arc:



[Example 6-62: 1st horn, mm. 191-194; two oboes and clarinet, mm. 193-200; flute, mm. 196-200]

The horn intones the gallant rhythms of the opening measures, and woodwinds take over the exhilarating continuation. Violins and flutes, in a duet with horns, oboes, and clarinets, add a broadly streaming epilogue:

Viol.
Flutes
ff

Horns
p *ff*

[Example 6-63: first violins, flutes, four horns, oboes, English horn, clarinets, mm. 205-212; second violins and violas, mm. 208-212]

In self-confident fullness, the stream of song flows until instead of a concluding D major, an abrupt minor breaks in.³⁸ The introductory motive of the violins rises up, “widely drawn” (“breit gezogen”):

Viol.
ff *dim. breit gezogen*

[Example 6-64: first violins, mm. 231-234]

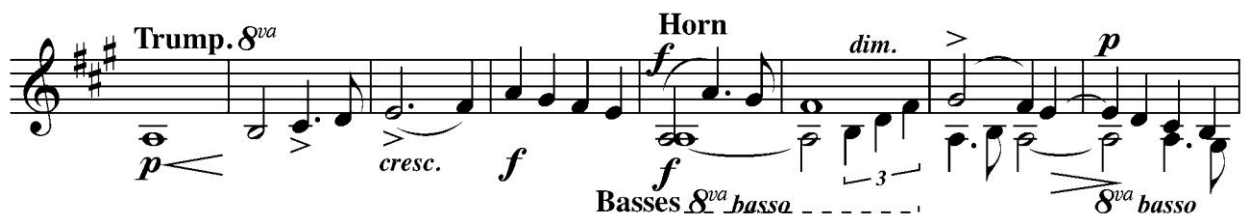
The other dream motives of the introduction are heard warningly and threateningly from the depths and from the heights. Sudden darkness spreads itself over the smooth picture that was

just bright. But the second theme is only frightened off for a few moments. Under a sudden F-sharp-major *tremolo* in the violins, it newly rises up, overcoming all inhibitions, relieving more and more of the pressure. It leads onward more enthusiastically than before, broadening to a hymn-like sweep, with victorious D major in the most luxuriant frenzy of excitement. From this jubilation, almost insatiably reaching out, a sudden crash and the deepest collapse. An unknown power has spoken: the hammer has fallen. All voices become silent, and only in the trumpets and trombones, the falling octave and chorale motives resound in demonic augmentation:



[Example 6-65: three trumpets and trombones (with tuba), mm. 336-346]

Added to this, judgment-like and in triple *forte* of the [231] horns, the motto of fate, G major–G minor. A pause for breath in terrible fright. A surge of strings in driving sixteenth notes, along with woodwinds and harp *glissandi*. A violent desire and attempt to overcome and suppress the monstrous terror by searching for the second theme. It is heard *fortissimo*, “coming forward” (“hervortretend”) from the trumpets. A turn from the frightful appearance, then surrender to a gentle, transfigured mood, a lyrically singing, “calming” (“beruhigend”), flowing A major:



[Example 6-66: 1st trumpet, mm. 364-367; four horns, cellos, and basses, mm. 368-371]

The second theme always comes through as a motive of promise and confidence, inwardly setting things upright. But the lyrical sweep flags, the mood darkens, and force stands against force. The song theme turns in inversion to F minor:



[Example 6-67: flutes, first violins, mm. 381-384]

“Somewhat more heavily, everything with raw strength” (“Etwas wuchtiger, alles mit roher Kraft”) the hammering wind rhythms sound out:



[Example 6-68: horns, m. 385]

The churning opening motive returns again, intensified:



[Example 6-69: trumpets, mm. 385-386]

The basses draw to the depths:



[Example 6-70: cellos and basses, mm. 385-386]

The strength is yet unbroken. The harmony slowly becomes brighter. F minor turns to C minor, “strong but somewhat measured” (“kräftig aber etwas gemessen”), then “ardently” (“feurig”) to C major. The march again firmly presses forward. Out of the “ardent” C major, a “gradually calming” (“allmählich sich beruhigend”), new A major blossoms, singing out in full harmonies and a wide sweeping melodic line, climbing again to a peaceful clarity. The introductory theme appears in a downward directed contrary motion, pointing, as it were, to a fulfillment of the desire that once flooded over:



[Example 6-71: violins, 3 horns, mm. 461-464]

The second theme, in organ-like fullness, again gives the concluding cadence. And there pounds the second hammer blow. Again are heard the judgment sounds from horns, trombones, and trumpets, this time without the major–minor motto of fate. Again the upward and downward surging string runs. Then a cadence is built over an octave motive from the basses:



[Example 6-72: trombones and tuba, mm. 489-492; bass clarinet and bassoons, mm. 490, 492]

It flows into the beginning of the introduction. The development, framed by the two hammer blows, has ended. The recapitulation begins, not only of the exposition, but of the whole first part including the introduction.³⁹ It is certainly no repetition in a literal sense. The introduction this time is barely half as extensive as before. The deep, earthly bells only sound at the beginning and then fade away, during which, “distantly but distinctly” (“in der Ferne aber deutlich”), the cowbells ring.⁴⁰ The buildup that presses toward the Allegro is lacking. Instead of this, a new detour directs at first to a resumption of the second theme. It now appears in B-flat major, in a “Grazioso” transformation from the oboe. The tempo becomes more intense, the theme blooms up more colorfully, and jumps into a bright A major. Violins and woodwinds [232] take it up. There underlies the octave theme in the trumpets, driving and building until, after a broad preparation on an E pedal point, the recapitulation of the original Allegro beginning enters. The thematic sequence is therefore reversed in the reprise, as the second theme directly attaches to the introduction and only then does the first theme follow. Now it is no longer given to the upper voices. Trombones, tubas, and basses begin. The development takes the greatest course, surpassing all previous buildups through the force of the storm. The motto of fate obtains an active, invasive thematic character. The first and second themes, the latter now also pulled to minor, exchange in the voice leading. The octave motive succinctly builds up to interweaving combinations:

Example 6-73 is a musical score for four parts: Horns, Trump., Tbn., and Tuba. The score is in 4/4 time and features a series of eighth and quarter notes with various dynamics including *sf*, *f*, and *ff*. The Horns part starts with a *sf* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Trump. part starts with a *f* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Tbn. part starts with a *ff* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Tuba part starts with a *ff* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The score is marked with *ff* and *ff < ff* dynamics.

[Example 6-73: horns, trombones, tuba, string basses, mm. 708-711]

Pressing ever more forward, it is abbreviated and flows into an active A major, where once again the introductory theme resounds like a song of triumph in major:

Example 6-74 is a musical score for two parts: Horns and Tbn. The score is in 4/4 time and features a series of eighth notes with various dynamics including *ff* and *f*. The Horns part starts with a *ff* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Tbn. part starts with a *f* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The score is marked with *ff* and *f* dynamics.

[Example 6-74: four horns, 3rd trombone, mm. 728-731]

The apotheosis of the powerfully striding bass theme now arises, with undulating major-key arpeggios in the strings and jubilant triadic trills in the woodwinds shining above it:

Example 6-75 is a musical score for three parts: Tbn., Tuba, and Basses. The score is in 4/4 time and features a series of eighth notes with various dynamics including *p*, *cresc.*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff*. The Tbn. part starts with a *p* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Tuba part starts with a *cresc.* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The Basses part starts with a *mf* dynamic and features a series of eighth notes. The score is marked with *p*, *cresc.*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff* dynamics.

[Example 6-75: cellos, basses, trombones, tuba, bassoons, bass clarinet, mm. 765-773]

After this glorious halo of A major, the opening of the introduction once again terribly foams to the surface. And then the third hammer blow. The motto of fate resounds for a long time in horns, trumpets, and trombones at the same time, with a mixture of stopped and open tones. It sounds for the last time. The strength of resistance is finally broken, and the storm has passed. Only a short epilogue follows as a coda. Over a penetrating timpani roll, the octave motive, *espressivo* in trombones and tuba, stretches itself upward like a shadow, “significantly slower” (“bedeutend langsamer”) in tempo and “heavy” (“schwer”) in expression:



[Example 6-76: trombones and tuba, mm. 790-794]

Clarinets and bassoons cover it with the dark D-major–D-minor harmonies of the fate motto like a shroud. The strings are silent. “Ever slower” (“Immer langsamer”), and ever softer, the octave motive sounds from the depths. Then a trenchant held A-minor chord. Heavy timpani beats and a drum roll. They trail into the distance. And out.

The Sixth is the only one of Mahler’s symphonies that does not close victoriously, like the First, Second, Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth, nor transfigured, like the Third, Fourth, and Ninth. And yet it would be wrong to give too extensive an interpretation to the tragedy that it proclaims. Mahler depicts the tragedy of a [233] single individual, destined for a downfall, who succumbs to the resistance of matter. He only succumbs, however, in view of a personally determined

existence, not in view of the living will. This will always sets new strength against the motto of fate, the knowledge of which has stood firmly from the outset, continually striving and overcoming. The fact that the moment enters where strength is spent, where no more resistance or recovery is possible, this is indeed tragic, but only in the sense of material existence. The hammer can only crush that which is accessible to it, or that which it is possible to crush. The spirit that directs the will is not to be bent, not to be destroyed. This spirit, which offers defiance to fate up until the last motion, which continually rebuilds the world, however often the hammer may break it in pieces, does not come to an end with the dark closing chord of the A-minor symphony. It has become acquainted with solitude in the happiness of creation and in the harshness of its tragedy. It cheered this solitude in the Fifth Symphony, where it led it to the heights of its own essence, and it shuddered before it in the Sixth, where it looked into itself in the abysses of life. Now it pulls it back out of this spell of ecstasies and visions of self-observation. It hearkens again to the voices that are heard from without. It is urged to forget the severity, the burden, the mysteries, and the suffering, and again to be only an instrument, only a living echo of resounding life. The soul has been penetrated to the depths, and has proclaimed the happiness and the torment which have lived within it. It now simply wants to sing once again. The solitary one takes the path back to nature, to the world, and to humanity. The Seventh Symphony results, and in its shadow, the crown of Mahlerian creation grows and slowly matures: the Eighth. [234 blank]

NOTES

- 1 Frequency of performance is not easy to quantify, as any statistics or data compiled by organizations such as the League of American Orchestras will not include all performances, particularly those by amateur groups. It is, however, safe to assert that the Fifth, at least, has now asserted itself as one of the more frequently performed Mahler symphonies, behind only the First and the Fourth. The Sixth still seems to lag behind today, as it did in Bekker's time. Its performance frequency is probably about the same as the Third, Seventh, and Ninth, and less than the Second.
- 2 In Bekker's time, the idea that the title "Tragische" came from Mahler himself probably arose from the inclusion of the title on the program for a performance conducted by Mahler on January 4, 1907 in Vienna. The later assertion by Bruno Walter postdates Bekker and first appeared in his Mahler biography of 1936. See, e.g., David Matthews, "The Sixth Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 366.
- 3 Bekker quotes the resignation letter in full in the "Anmerkungen," giving Richard Specht as his source. It appears in *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, revised and edited by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and Hamburg: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), pp. 322-23 (Letter 376).
- 4 Bekker's placement of the words "hoch-symbolisch intentioniert" in quotation marks may be a reference to a well-known statement of Goethe to Felix Mendelssohn in a letter from September 9, 1831. The subject was Mendelssohn's planned composition of a cantata to Goethe's poem "Die erste Walpurgisnacht." The passage in question is translated in John Michael Cooper, *Mendelssohn, Goethe, and the Walpurgis Night: The Heathen Muse in European Culture, 1700-1850* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007), p. 62: "It pleases me greatly that you have dedicated yourself so seriously to 'Die erste Walpurgisnacht,' for no one has been able to make anything of this poem, not even our excellent [Carl Friedrich] Zelter. It *is intended as elevated symbolism* [original: 'hoch-symbolisch intentioniert'—italics added by KDH] in the literal sense. For in the history of the world, it must eternally be repeated that something old, established, proven, [and] reassuring will be compacted, pushed aside, dislocated, and, if not abolished, then corralled into the tightest space by emergent new forces . . ."
- 5 According to several sources, Stefan being the earliest, Mahler made these comments about the cowbells at a rehearsal for the first Munich performance of the Seventh Symphony in 1908. See Paul Stefan, *Gustav Mahler: Eine Studie über Persönlichkeit und Werk* (Munich: R. Piper & Co., 1912), p. 126. See also Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), p. 165.
- 6 The availability of Constantin Floros's book on the symphonies in English (the last of a three-volume work and the only one to be translated) has been one of the best sources of Bekker material in English to this point, since Floros cited him often. He refers to Bekker more in connection with the Sixth than with any other symphony, including this significant insight about the symbolism of the hammer, along with that of the major-minor sequence below (see *The Symphonies*, pp. 162-63, 164).
- 7 In this description, both instruments often termed "whip" in English are used: the familiar "slapstick" (German "Holzklapper") and, as seen in the Second and Third Symphonies, the "rute," the switch-like beater used on the wood of the bass drum. The former was removed from later revisions of the score.
- 8 While the chorale episode is an obvious transition in a sonata exposition, Robert Samuels, in his detailed semiotic study of the Sixth Symphony, notes the peculiarity in the choice of a chorale for this moment, the

“nominalist” nature of Mahler’s formal procedures, and the unusual harmonic path of the chorale, pointing out ways in which Mahler could have approached F major in a more conventional way. Samuels’s concern at this point is a discussion of musical “narrative,” in the context of which he describes the sonata as an “artificial model.” See Robert Samuels, *Mahler’s Sixth Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 145–45. On the subject of Mahler’s sonata-form movements as musical narratives, see Seth Monahan, “Mahler’s Sonata Narratives” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2008), which includes chapters on both the first movement and the Finale of the Sixth. The chapter on the first movement (pp. 104–49) discusses the tonal plot of the exposition, including the chorale transition, in some depth. See also Christopher Hailey’s essay on the Sixth Symphony, which analyzes its formal structure in terms of key distributions and the concept of “associative tonality” as coined by Robert Bailey (“Structure and Tonal Plan in Mahler’s Sixth Symphony” in *Gustav Mahler*, edited by Hermann Danuser [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992], pp. 253–75). Hailey states that the succession of harmonies in the chorale’s first phrase outlines the principal tonalities, roughly in their order of appearance, of the whole movement (pp. 274–75).

- 9 Bekker’s highly intriguing diversion, which both criticizes the second theme and justifies it, is a reaction to such terse criticisms as that given by Mahler’s friend Guido Adler, who characterized the theme as “melodically weak” (“melodisch schwach”). See Guido Adler, *Gustav Mahler* (Leipzig and Vienna: Universal Edition, 1916), p. 74. Because Bekker was writing long before Alma published her memoirs, he was probably unaware of the now familiar description of the theme as a portrait of her. A more sympathetic view of the theme is provided by Matthews, who makes reference to the “Alma” connection and then connects the melody to the idea of “redemption,” making further connections to the Eighth Symphony and to Wagner’s *Parsifal*, then showing how the melody is derived from material in the first subject. See Matthews, “The Sixth Symphony,” pp. 367–68. An article on the subject of the “Alma” theme, reimagining the Sixth as a type of “domestic tragedy,” was recently published by Seth Monahan. See “‘I have tried to capture you ...’: Rethinking the ‘Alma’ Theme from Mahler’s Sixth Symphony” in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64/1 (2011), pp. 119–78.
- 10 The word “Rosalien” used by Bekker here refers specifically to a type of brief melodic sequence where a relatively small fragment is repeated a step higher, as in the second and third full measures (mm. 78–79) of Example 6–9.
- 11 The repetition of the exposition in practice, which Bekker represents as self-evident, had fallen out of favor to such a degree later in the century that Theodor Adorno, writing in 1960, made the strange observation that the movement “originally had repeat marks after the exposition (Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], p. 92). Mahler did in fact remove a planned exposition repeat in at least two instances, the second movement of the Fifth and the first movement of the Ninth, but he did not do this here as Adorno’s remark mistakenly suggests.
- 12 Floros would later identify this point as the fourth and final part of the development (*The Symphonies*, p. 166). Bekker had previously indicated four parts, and this seems the only logical location for the beginning of the fourth part. But since he labeled the cowbell and celesta episode (the third part in Floros) as neither the second nor the third part, and since he makes no later reference to a fourth part, it is impossible to know whether his demarcation of the third part here is a mistake or intentional.
- 13 The statement about the “textbook example of sonata form” below (see note 16) is undermined here. Bekker appears to place the beginning of the coda here, as does Floros. Robert Samuels, however, continues the recapitulation at this point, calling the following music “the longest ‘developmental’ passage in the movement” (*Mahler’s Sixth Symphony*, p. 146). This is not without merit, since the second subject in D major is so briefly

presented after the transition, whose differences to the exposition Samuels also discusses. Samuels does not begin the coda until m. 449, about 75 measures later. He contrasts this developmental passage with Beethoven's coda procedures, since there is a departure from the tonic without a return until m. 449 (pp. 146-47).

- 14 In the earlier version of the score now published by Dover, this passage is played by trombones and tuba throughout. In the later edition, they drop out after m. 407, leaving the continuation to clarinets and bassoons. Bekker was presumably working from the earlier edition.
- 15 Bekker indicates the *tremolo* in second violins. In the later edition, it is given only to celesta.
- 16 This statement has often been cited by later authors, e.g., Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 165.
- 17 These statements seem to point the way toward viewpoints such as those of Samuels. By stating that the second part of the old sonata form was "mostly recapitulation," in contrast to Mahler's practice here, Bekker acknowledges that there is clearly something new and unusual about the end of the recapitulation and the coda.
- 18 The controversy over the order of the middle movements persists even today. Erwin Ratz, who edited the first Critical Edition of the symphony that was published in 1963, believed he had evidence that Mahler wished to revert to the original order, but this has been contested by Jerry Bruck, Gilbert Kaplan, and Reinhold Kubik. Their conclusions, which they regard as decisive and incontestable, are published in *The Correct Movement Order in Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, edited by Gilbert Kaplan (New York: Kaplan Foundation, 2004). David Matthews, however, already presented a strongly argued case for the original Scherzo–Andante order on *musical* grounds, which was published in 1999 ("The Sixth Symphony," pp. 372-74). Even after the Kaplan publication, Gastón Fournier-Facio was prepared to contest the conclusiveness of the Andante–Scherzo order (see "The 'Correct' Order of the Middle Movements in Mahler's Sixth Symphony," Appendix I in Donald Mitchell, *Discovering Mahler: Writings on Mahler, 1955-2005*, edited by Gastón Fournier-Facio [Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2007], pp. 633-47). Performances and recordings with the Scherzo in second position are much more common, as most available scores are printed with that order. In 2004, Kubik, then the chief editor of the Critical Edition, changed the official policy of the edition and directed that the movement order should be "corrected" in future printings. It is interesting that Bekker retains the revised Andante–Scherzo order in his analysis, even though Willem Mengelberg performed the symphony with the Scherzo–Andante order in 1919 and 1920 on the basis of a direction from Alma in a telegram sent after Mengelberg asked her about the question of movement order. This telegram formed the basis for Ratz's decision in the first Critical Edition. These performances by Mengelberg would have been exactly contemporary with Bekker's writing. The scores used by Bekker still had the Scherzo–Andante order, as he notes both here and in the "Anmerkungen."
- 19 Bekker's criticism of this theme is notable and frequently cited by later critics. Samuels refers to Bekker's words in the context of his detailed and thorough motivic analysis of the movement (*Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, pp. 59-60). Floros also quotes this passage, strongly disagreeing with Bekker (*The Symphonies*, pp. 176-77). Both Samuels and Floros refer to Arnold Schoenberg's defense of the theme, in which he focused on its five-bar phrases. One of the most interesting points Samuels makes in relation to the theme is the close resemblance of its final cadence (which Bekker finds "convoluted and forced") to the closing melodic turn in the main melody of the first song from the *Kindertotenlieder* (*Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, pp. 18, 26). Bekker's failure to find this connection is notable in light of his references to this song in connection with the Fifth Symphony (see p. 403). One later writer who expressed sentiments similar to Bekker regarding this theme is Adorno, who referred to Bekker's statement about the theme being gradually forgotten over the course of the movement. At this point, Adorno is discussing themes and their identities, using the memorable expression that thematic variants "divest

the theme of its identity; the fulfillment is the positive manifestation of what the theme has not yet become. In some movements that make use of main themes in a normal configuration, they protrude strangely from the actual musical process, as if it were not their own history” (*Mahler*, pp. 88-89).

- 20 Samuels notes the striking similarity of these figures (which play a major role in his semiotic and motivic analysis) to those in the main theme of the first movement from m. 11 (shown here in Example 6-3 above). He observes the diversion into the closing phrase derived from *Kindertotenlieder*, No. 1 as opposed to the “violent half-close of the first movement.” See *Mahler’s Sixth Symphony*, p. 26.
- 21 Floros quotes Bekker here (*The Symphonies*, p. 179). Again, the thread of E major as the key of “transfiguration” makes an appearance. Floros further compares the melodic turn to the “Blicket auf” motif from the Eighth Symphony. This motif appears in E-flat major (the home key of the Eighth and of this movement), but it is interesting to note that E major also plays a large role in Part II of the Eighth, right at the moment when *Mater gloriosa* “soars above” (m. 780).
- 22 In this context Samuels’s invocation of the Dance of Death (typically more closely associated with the Scherzo of the Fourth Symphony) is interesting (see *Mahler’s Sixth Symphony*, pp. 119ff.). See the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 390-91, note 18. Samuels’s analysis of this movement is primarily concerned with the semiotic codification of genre, using rhythmic and melodic structures and their connections to dance genres.
- 23 Indeed, Samuels, referring to Floros (in his second, untranslated German volume) and Adorno, compares and contrasts the use of similar generic and motivic materials in the scherzo movements of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, implying that the similarities between the movements are as important as the differences. See *Mahler’s Sixth Symphony*, pp. 94-95. See also Adorno, *Mahler*, p. 103.
- 24 In later versions of the score, only trombones play these notes without tuba.
- 25 Although Bekker states that the passage in this example includes trumpets, it does not, even in the first editions.
- 26 The translation of the word “altväterisch” is very difficult. In the published translation of Floros, *The Symphonies*, “jovial” is suggested (p. 174), perhaps a reference to a literal reading of the word as “grandfatherly,” which does not really fit the nature nor the programmatic suggestions of the theme (which Alma, probably anachronistically, compared to the arrhythmic playing of children [see Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 175-76]). Samuels provides the helpful information, for which he credits Paul Banks, that the word can refer to a Bohemian dance with an asymmetrical combination of meters, as in this Trio section (*Mahler’s Sixth Symphony*, p. 95). Because most analysts, including Bekker, interpret the word as an adjective, I have opted for the most accepted English rendering, “old-fashioned.” Edmund Jephcott, in his translation of Adorno, *Mahler*, uses the similar “antiquated” (p. 103).
- 27 “Pas,” not a German word, is another apparent reference to the French dance term. See also its use in the chapter on the Second Symphony, p. 198 and p. 243, note 24.
- 28 Not given in quotation marks in Bekker, but retained untranslated here. See note 26 above.
- 29 In this example and the next, there is a one-measure discrepancy in numbering between the first edition reprinted by Dover and later editions. This is because m. 332 in the first edition was split into two measures (332-333) in the revisions. The numbering here follows the later versions.

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- 30 But the Andante also provides a preparation for the Finale in the smooth E-flat-major–C-minor transition, as noted by Fournier-Facio, Matthews, and others. See note 18 above.
- 31 Bekker is correct in the sense of measure count. The Finale has more measures than that of the Second (surprisingly so) and even the Scherzo of the Fifth. In terms of performance time, it is certainly behind the Second's Finale.
- 32 This discussion revisits Bekker's theses regarding the "finale problem" and the "Finale Symphony" in his opening chapter, "The Symphonic Style." See pp. 61-62.
- 33 Samuels provides an intriguing and stimulating discussion of various analytical descriptions of the Finale in a sonata form. Of these, Bekker's is the earliest he includes and Floros's the latest. Central to the discussion is that none of these analysts places formal boundaries in exactly the same places. Bekker's is, notably, the only one to place the boundaries of the development section precisely between the first two hammer blows, resulting in a briefer section, as everybody else either begins or ends the development section, or both, before and after the hammer blows. Samuels tabulates all of these analytical efforts in impressive detail in *Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, pp. 72-75. Adorno's analysis is probably closest to Bekker's, but he places the hammer blows as inner markers within a larger development. Adorno's perceptive discussion, in which he makes provocative statements such as "the sonata skeleton is indispensable to the last movement of the Sixth in binding together its dimensions" and "Mahler's emancipation from sonata form was mediated by the sonata," and in which he also introduces the concept of "disintegration fields" (or "dissolution fields") is found in *Mahler*, pp. 96-100. The idea is that Mahler is testing the limits of sonata form as a means of releasing himself from the bonds of the formal structure. Floros, after making note of several previous discussions of the movement, including those of Erwin Ratz, Adorno, and Bernd Sponheuer (all included in Samuels's table) makes the highly charged statement that "the structure of the movement corresponds to normal sonata form," but, as Samuels states, he invents the concept of "music from far away," which roughly corresponds to Adorno's "disintegration fields." These rather different metaphors used to describe the same passages in the movement only heighten the divergent nature of the various analytical attempts. Samuels notes that Floros (and Sponheuer) rely on extramusical explanations at those points where the formal functions are most unreadable. See *The Symphonies*, p. 180. See also *Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, pp. 80-82.
- 34 Bekker avoids any discussion here of Mahler's later deletion of the third hammer blow, but in the "Anmerkungen," he dismisses it as a practical matter and explains his reasoning for including the third hammer stroke in the discussion and analysis of the movement.
- 35 Mahler actually asks for "low bell sounds" here, not cowbells. The cowbells do not appear until m. 238.
- 36 Mahler spelled the Italian word incorrectly in the score.
- 37 In the original, a bar line is missing after the first four notes, which are an anacrusis. It has been inserted here.
- 38 For Samuels, this moment and the passage that follows effectively illustrate the problems with formal analysis in the movement. It is nearly impossible to find agreement on where the "development section" begins. Most analysts (except for Bekker) see this as either the beginning of the development section or as the introduction to the development "proper." The echoes of the introduction are indeed strong here, which would prompt such a reading. Adorno places the beginning of the development later than the others, but still much earlier than Bekker. Bekker's reasons for including the entire section up to the first hammer blow as part of the exposition

probably have to do with the return of second theme material in an implied D major (the key associated with the theme on its first appearance) around m. 288, or simply the ease of using the hammer as a formal demarcating line. Samuels discusses the existence of at least five possible starting points for the development section between mm. 229 and 364, the extreme points of the section in question. For the entire discussion, see *Mahler's Sixth Symphony*, pp. 82-88.

- 39 Based on Bekker's language here, his placement of the recapitulation is ambiguous. Samuels, applying the statement that the second hammer blow at m. 479 frames the development, places Bekker's recapitulation there, but this sentence, coming as it does after the example labeled as 6-72, could just as easily facilitate a reading where Bekker begins the recapitulation at m. 520, as do all of the other analysts tabulated by Samuels. This boundary is not nearly as problematic as the line of demarcation between the "exposition" and the "development."
- 40 Bekker here makes reference to the low bells, which he did not do when discussing the opening, where the cowbells are in fact not heard.

[235]

SEVENTH SYMPHONY

[236 blank]

[237] **August** Halm wrote a book about “The Symphony of Anton Bruckner.”¹ The wording of the subject is notable. Regarding Bruckner’s output, a point of view is possible that takes up the conditions of the individual work and applies them as typical. As different as his nine symphonies are with respect to thematic and structural design, they are strikingly similar to each other in the elemental traits of character and appearance. The overview of the complete works involuntarily urges the esthetician to the construction of an ideal model for “the” Brucknerian symphony. The reason lies in the curious psychological conditions for Bruckner’s creation. His capability for spiritual experience did not correspond to his musical imagination. The musical aspect for him was again and again a variation of precisely that ideal basic idea, testifying of an ingenious, astonishing diversity of musical impulse, of a constantly growing maturity. Yet it is always a variation, not a new creation in the absolute sense, no progression from world to world.

With Mahler, it is different. Without question his symphonies show similarities of style, of the nature and direction of ideas, and of musical formulation. Abstracting from this, one can also recognize the basic type of his creation and formation. But it is not possible to make the multiplicity of his works clear from an ascertainment of the basic type. Each of them is a manifestation in itself, grown out of particular necessities, a new substance, and a new world, enlivened by stylistic rules of its own. These symphonies are not variations placed around the same nucleus. They are chain-like metamorphoses, reaching into each other. In them works the antithetical principle of development, the law of progression out of opposition, out of overcoming that which has gone before. If different works among them also come together into communal groups, such as the *Wunderhorn* symphonies and the instrumental symphonies, the

differences still persist within these groups. They give the single work its special and individual meaning, similar to no other. In this strength of Mahler—to consistently form new styles—lies his intellectual superiority in comparison to the musical genius of Anton Bruckner. Or vice versa: intellectual superiority gave him the power of stylistic formation that made each new work into a manifestation of its own legitimacy and its own essence.

The Seventh Symphony also stands as something new, arisen from previously unknown sources in the cycle of the instrumental symphonies. It does not have the grandiose impetus of the Fifth. It does not have the demonic tragedy of the Sixth. It signifies a return to life, to the joy of Becoming and Being. The special feature of the two preceding works was a sharp focus on the problems of the individual, the attitude toward the individual entity that is seen in opposition to the world. The Seventh removes such opposition. It orders the individual entity within the context of the world body, offsets apparent contradictions, and restores the cosmic unity. It thus bridges the gap from the individualistic instrumental symphonies to the all-encompassing choral symphony.

The five-movement construction is organized in three stages. Two large-scale outer movements—a sonata movement and a final rondo—frame three middle movements of smaller [238] design. Mahler gave particular headings to two of them, the second and the fourth movements. He calls them “*Nachtmusiken*” (“Night Music Pieces”). Explanations for this description are not available, as epistolary and anecdotal material about the Seventh has not yet become known. Therefore, we do not know what Mahler particularly imagined with “*Nachtmusik*.” If programmatic intentions had a say, they remained a secret of the composer.² In character, the two night music pieces are different. The second in F major can be readily

approached as a serenade, and thereby justifies its name. The first is a piece full of lyrical, ballad-like moods, held in a narrative tone, such that the heading here allows a poetic interpretation. Between the two, a Scherzo is interpolated that could be called “Night Music” by the same right. It is a spooky piece, related in its restlessly hurrying tone to the earlier ghostly movements of Mahler—the funeral march of the First, the Fish Sermon of the Second, the Death Dance-Scherzo of the Fourth—but lighter and more removed from reality in the spider web-like sounds of the “shadowy” (“schattenhaft”) minor portion and the songful, tender melodic character of the major-key Trio.

The three night pieces, which, with varying grades of shadows, portray the charm and horror of darkness, are framed by two day pieces full of blinding brightness. The first movement is the glowing light that breaks forth from the longing dawn into clarity, while the Finale is the blossoming day. Both movements are apotheoses of the Dionysian. They not only belong together in character, they are also linked thematically. The main theme of the opening movement becomes a driving force in the last part of the Finale and shines at the end in radiant splendor.

This opposition of light and darkness, of joy that loudly urges upward and quiet secrecy that is turned within itself, now dreamily meditative, now fantastically agitated, governs the work. Battles are not fought out; rather contrasts stand immediately and unresolved next to each other. Here are the two outer movements, untroubled, victorious without resistance, facts of an ever active life.³ There are the three middle movements, secretive, confusedly agitated, and traversed by an enthusiastic dichotomy of feelings. A balance is not attempted, for it would lie outside the idea of the work. It is grown out of the shattering spiritual agitation of the Sixth Symphony and

seeks liberation in the simple view of great, cleansing manifestations of natural existence. The human torment and oppression, the tension and friction, is left out as insignificant, as too small for the breadth of the circle of feelings that is sought here. The memory of that is pushed back into the mood of the past in the middle movements. In the outer movements, however, is built a new, primitive world of facts from basic creative powers, which is introduced to the listener with naïve self-awareness.

The middle movements show that type of romantic melody and shape which, in mood, style, and character, point back to that which has been. It may not only be a conscious archaizing that leads Mahler to such designs, but rather a need that deeply took root in his nature for support from [239] that which has become a part of the past. Such a division of his essence, such a conflict in his own will is one of the most curious traits of Mahler. The childlike, believing, kind and trusting aspects of his essence, the joy in intimate life, in the idyllic, in the pure atmosphere of all sounds, in the serene limitation and loveliness of the individual appearance, stands within him against the skeptical agonizing, the fanciful wandering, the urge to a grand emotional gesture, the pleasure in painful disharmony, the will to exceed all limits. Mahler never succeeded in reconciling these basic elements of his character with one another. He mixed them often, but never fused them. In the *Wunderhorn* symphonies, poetic moods had created the bond for the volatile, changing streams of thought. In the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, exactly this opposition, perceived as painful, was the driving force. Now he succeeds with a work in which he treats the contrasts as worlds that are separated unto themselves, appearing in no external relationships. While the three middle pieces form a unity through relationships of basic mood

and temporal succession, the two outer movements provide the powerful frame and simultaneously the summation of the sustaining spiritual force.

The outer movements are primarily, as always in such cases, particularly with Mahler, and despite the captivating success of the whole design, less accessible than the inner movements. These have the immediate attraction of the small, clear form, the melodic eloquence, and the casually archaic tone. There are no spiritual ties to be detected, for it is purely according to mood that the images unfold. The amiable, appealing tone also remains perceptible there, where the musical character, as in the Scherzo, passes into dark realms of feeling. These three pieces thus presented few difficulties to listeners from the beginning. They act of themselves through their musical attractions. That these are particularly refined in all three pieces, that Mahler's art in miniature reaches its summit here and makes all three movements into treasures even among his middle movements, can be emphasized as a sign of a continual increase in productive capability.⁴ They are the last pieces of such a kind from Mahler's hand. The middle movements of the Ninth Symphony do not take up these models again. Those of the Tenth, insofar as the sketches allow a conclusion, also do not lead further down these paths. Here ends the line of idyllic and fantastically eerie Mahlerian pieces in a small format.

Despite all recognition of the individual value of these pieces, one must not consider them as creations for themselves outside of the frame in which Mahler placed them. Only this frame provides them the proper exposure. It gives them the ironic overtone of past romanticism and, in a higher sense, of the not quite serious, not completely realistic role that Mahler assigns them as middle symphonic members. If the listener initially holds onto the comfortably appealing middle movements and praises Mahler's special gift for miniature musical art in them,

he makes exactly the same mistake as the spectator who takes the comedy in a drama as the most essential element. For Mahler, the middle movements are primarily contrasts. As pieces for themselves, they have for him a significantly lesser meaning than the outer movements. They are interpolated in order to [240] unloose the flowing life between these two. The dynamic forces act in the outer movements. The course of the symphonist leads further onward from them.

In the outer movements, therefore, also lie the stylistic problems. As the Seventh Symphony stands beyond all tragedy, as it avoids artistic interlacing of ideas and leads from the mood of destruction and downfall in the Sixth back into the world of light and joy, so is its musical style also simplified. Mahler's basic homophonic sense again breaks through, along with the fondness for a broadly sweeping melodic line with its strong linear impulse of motion and the elemental strength of its rhythmic drive. The contrapuntal art of combining several ideas, their reorganization by augmentation, diminution, and canonic imitation merges with the earlier practiced art of thematic formation into a new melodic and contrapuntal style, as it were, or at least into the beginnings of such a style. The art of the musical line in the inherited sense changes into a freely handled art of melodic, thematic unfolding. The delight in craft, which particularly governs the Finale of the Fifth and passages of the closing movement of the Sixth, steps back again. It makes room for an inwardly stronger, urgent will to a form that can now support itself upon a strengthened technical capacity of expression. A comparison of the closing movements of the Fifth and the Seventh makes the progress recognizable. Both finales are rondo movements, and in both the goal is to monumentalize the old playful rondo type. In the Fifth, Mahler still needed to avail himself of the incorporation of fugue. This provided the basic

dimensions of the architecture and gave the Rondo both weight and sustaining force. With the Seventh, the formal scaffold is no longer required. Here the Rondo spins itself from the main idea in variation-like intensification. The architecture grows effortlessly and yet strongly out of the theme without making use of constrictive guides. The handling of form has progressed to a playful lightness without robbing the whole of weight or importance.⁵

A will to concentration governs the work. It shows the increasing maturity. A similar process takes place as after the Third Symphony. Until the completion of the Third there is a striving toward an enlargement of the form, toward a spatial and acoustic expansion. Then a sudden contraction, an abatement of the constructive will, of the drive into that which is unmeasured. In compensation there is a new awakening of the joy in intimate life, in the finely smoothed, delicate form, in the careful balance of dimensions, in the soloistic effect. With the Seventh, the process is similar in details, but not identical. The parodistic, archaizing tendency that dominates the Fourth in key features here remains limited to the inner movements. In contrast, the goal of a large architecture that characterizes the instrumental symphonies throughout is also decisive in the Seventh, for the whole layout as well as the outer movements. Its restraint in relation to the formal structures that reach extremes in the two preceding works does not signify a reversion or a relaxation, but rather a stronger concentration of strength, a capability for a more solid direction of the will. Thus the two outer movements, although the first in particular falls behind the usual proportions in regard to content, do not come across as reductions. The [241] monumental character stands firm from the first sounds. The invention is set up from the outset upon the production of powerful formal types.

This is a peculiarity of the art of the later Mahler. In general, little receptivity exists for this particular idiosyncrasy. One perceives his themes too much as individual appearances outside of the whole, whereby they usually do not gain, and occasionally may even appear as weak. One does not see them in context, as parts of the complete form, as seeds of mighty constructions. At first, these are not artistically constructed around them. Rather, the themes carry the movements in themselves from the first sound and then form them, unfolding them out of an urgent compulsion.⁶ In this productive force of action, in this formal pregnancy of Mahler's themes, perhaps lies the explanation for their often surprisingly primitive cut, for a certain deficiency of appeal. Here is shown the inner limitation of the symphonic idea. In contrast to the song, it is not a singular, but rather a complementary conception. Mahler's complete development all the way up to the Ninth Symphony stands under the pressure of the assignment to acquire the capability to construct a theme from the idea of the whole movement. The fourth motive as a basic symbol in the First Symphony was a hesitant attempt. In the *Wunderhorn* symphonies, poetic relationships played into the thematic formation, and the word provided explanations and contexts that influenced the free working-out of the theme complexes. Only in the instrumental symphonies did Mahler find the possibility that was needed to unfold his constructive fantasy. It is pointless to question whether this kind of thematic formation from the whole picture was a necessity or a virtue. It was a necessity that was given not only through the personality of Mahler but also through the nature of the new symphonic art. The same way that Mahler went had been traveled by Bruckner before him. One could almost say that Bruckner was frustrated by the abundance of his natural musical talent. It happened that he allowed himself to be carried away by delight in the individual thematic appearance and, out of

an overflowing creative force, treated this more as a thing for itself than he allowed it to have a relationship to the symphonic whole. Themes such as the inexhaustible ascending one from Bruckner's Seventh Symphony necessarily had an oppressive effect on the movements that followed them. If Mahler was forced to budget more economically, this cannot be seriously pronounced as an accusation against his talent. Here, the inner will of the artist is covered by his necessities, and out of such an agreement grows the form that is perfect in itself.

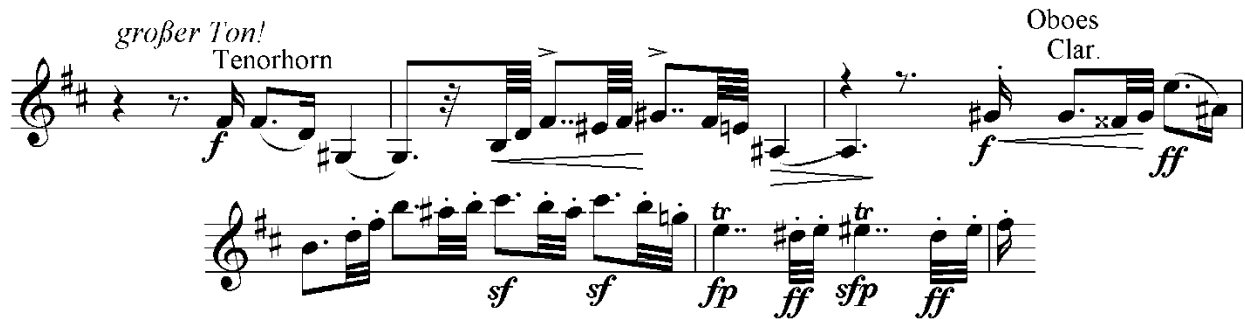
The first movement begins with an introduction. Built more concisely than the introductions of the First and Third symphonies and the Finale of the Sixth, it nonetheless carries within it the plan of the whole movement. "Langsam. (Adagio)" ("Slowly"), the solemn rhythm sounds in the dark registers of the strings and woodwinds:



[Example 7-1: low B in parts of cellos, basses, and bassoons, mm. 1-2]⁷

It is firmly held to *pianissimo* through eight measures. In the second half of each measure⁸ there are deep, held harmonies of trombones and tuba with bass drum rolls. Based on the visual impression, one could think of a funeral march [242], but the harmony awakens other ideas. It is a strange floating, mystical sound: B minor with the added major sixth G-sharp, pedantically speaking the half-diminished seventh chord⁹ on G-sharp in first inversion as a six-five chord. A groping, hollow thrust that obtains a sort of heavy mysteriousness through the uniform rhythm. This mood is further increased by the elevation of the harmony from the root B up to C-sharp in the third measure. Only with the turn to B minor in the fifth measure do firm tonal outlines

emerge. The basic harmony even now remains unstated explicitly. The whole introduction works as a harmonic intensification until the Allegro explosion in the main key, which finally appears clearly there. Into this fog of harmonies sounds, like a call, a wind theme of a particular kind such as Mahler to this point had never invented. It does not have the sharp cut of the fanfare like the opening theme of the Third Symphony. Through the seventh chord, into whose intervals it climbs down and back up, it obtains something uncertain, seeking, an expression of longing, but without the addition of lamenting and sentimentality. "Here roars nature," Mahler is supposed to have said according to a statement of Specht.¹⁰ This description matches the character of the theme in its mixture of longing and grandeur. The tenor horn, not commonly used in the symphonic orchestra, is used soloistically here. The trombone may have sounded too heavy and cumbersome, the horn not sufficiently forceful. "Grand tone" ("Großer Ton") is prescribed. The structure shows a fertile strength and grandness of linear motion such that one could almost speak of a new melodic style. The arch of the melody is spanned over sixteen Adagio measures. As it unfolds ever new harmonic and ornamental attractions while it spreads out, it also releases new sound groups of the orchestra from period to period. Oboes and clarinets take over the call from the tenor horn, the trumpet follows them, and flutes and clarinets follow it in turn, until the tenor horn again obtains the lead up to the B-major breakthrough. It is like the unleashing of active forces from a hazy dream into a clear emergence of consciousness. The theme, in whose continuation the secondary voices of basses and violins also take part, has two rising lines. The first leads from the tenor horn solo up through the conclusion of the woodwinds, and moves in a straightforward ascent:



[Example 7-2: tenor horn, mm. 2-4; oboes and clarinets, mm. 4-7; first violins, mm. 6-7]

At once, this rise is astonishing, without taking a breath, without switching or turning. The strength flows solely from the broken chordal seventh motive of the first three tones, and with that actually from the opening harmony. With the F-sharp-major half-close of the sixth measure, the highest intensification is achieved. The strength has gathered itself and presses toward a release. The originally slurred seventh motive is further directed motivically as a sharp-edged trumpet call:



[Example 7-3: trumpet, mm. 7-8; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 9-11]

After this driving interpolating episode [243] is the closing tenor horn solo, *fortissimo*. It begins in a firm B minor and flows, intensified by chromatically thrusting basses, into a glorious and brilliant B major:



[Example 7-4: tenor horn, mm. 12-17]

This theme, curious in construction as well as in the turn to songful melody, has something revelatory in the nature of its origin and passing. It makes an effect through its presence, and this presence is exhausted right away after one playing. That it is not only intended for the beginning of the introduction, but rather stands in relation to the emergence of the following movement, needs no confirmation with such a simultaneously organic and economical creative nature as Mahler. But these relationships are of a different kind than those of the introductory theme to a main movement in the usual sense. They do not affect the opening theme of the Allegro, rather they only come to a breakthrough in the course of the movement's development. Within this introduction, one playing is sufficient. As its appearance quietly and glowingly comes forth out of the darkness, so it also expires almost immediately with the last melodic note. The dotted accompanying rhythm still sounds after it through two measures in deep tones, and the opening call of the melody resounds, *fortissimo* and quickly cut off, from the tenor horn. "Somewhat less slowly, but always very measured" ("Etwas weniger langsam, aber immer sehr gemessen"), in short broken rhythms and briefly spaced intervallic steps, a quiet march motive from the winds, "*pianissimo*, aber (but) *marcato*." It has roots in the ninth measure of the opening theme, which now strides forward independently. Violins join in,

pizzicato, only then, suddenly breaking out, to turn the march toward the powerfully emotional with a stormy upswing:

Etwas weniger langsam, aber immer sehr gemessen
W.W.
aber. pp marc.

Bsn.
Vcl. *pp*

p cresc. ff

Viol.

ff

[Example 7-5: flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, cellos, mm. 19-22 (*pizzicato* violins implied); first violin run, m. 22]

Again the harmonic certainty is lost. The march chords evade every establishment of a main key. Only the cadence of the strings steers unexpectedly to E-flat minor.¹¹ The opening rhythm is heard hammered, *fortissimo*, in the trumpets, horns, timpani, and string basses, while woodwinds trill on the E-flat, held like a pedal point. It is like an elemental awakening. In the trombones, “very prominently” (“*sehr hervortretend*”), a theme stretches out that is the subject of this call and the call of the introduction in general, and which represents the active force of this movement:

Tromb. *stark hervortretend*

Trump.

f ff sf sf ff < sf sf

[Example 7-6: trombones, mm. 27-30; trumpet, mm. 30-31]

The passionate and rebellious E-flat minor sinks after a few measures again back into the mystical B minor. Over the quietly quivering rhythms, “Tempo primo Adagio subito, but more flowing than at the beginning” (“Tempo primo Adagio subito, aber fließender als zu Anfang”), the new theme is heard *fortissimo* in the tenor horn: [244]



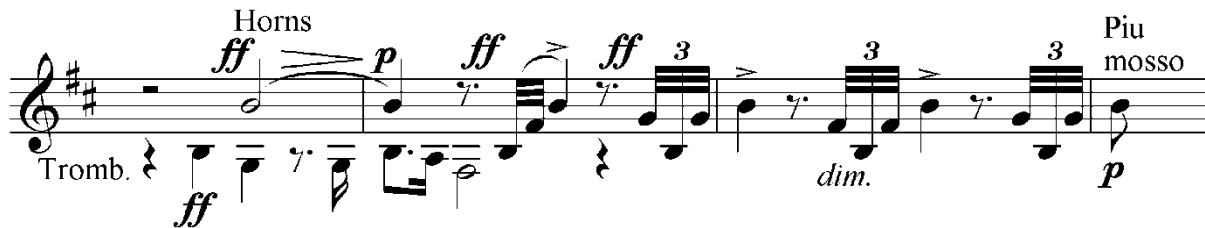
[Example 7-7: tenor horn, mm. 32-36]

Now the motion is increasing. With rhythmic impetus, the trumpet leads further; the accompanying rhythm and the new theme remain connected. Strings in unison, supported by horn rhythms, begin “imperceptibly pressing” (“unmerklich drängend”) to cast off the slow tempo, the Adagio shell:

Von hier an (unmerklich) drängend

[Example 7-8: horns, m. 39; violins (with viola and cello doubling), mm. 39-40]

Horns, then trombones, as if calling, take up the opening theme. In a *Più mosso* that is quickly attained, the calls build up, driving forward in alternation through the shifting of the accented beat. The rhythmic motive is abbreviated and released into a soaring chordal motion:



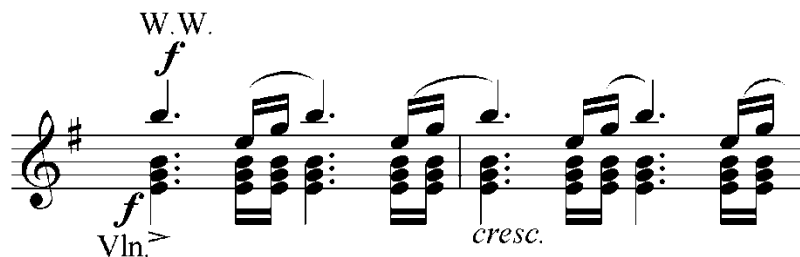
[Example 7-9: trombones and horns, mm. 42-45]

Without any external dynamic means, only through rhythmic acceleration, the “Allegro con fuoco” in E minor is suddenly achieved.¹² The theme sounds out in horns and cellos. With its short, strong head motive, the many breath pauses, the broken, yet uniform rhythms, the melodic line that is only based on sharpness of motion, but unattractive in itself, and the probing harmony, it reflects a passionately unsteady, hard grasping will:



[Example 7-10: horns, mm. 50-57; cellos, mm. 50-53, some viola doubling, mm. 54-57]

It is actually a double theme. The opening rhythm accompanies as a counterpoint with persistently held E-minor harmony, partly in firm violin chords, partly in the violently soaring *legato* of the oboes and clarinets:



[Example 7-11: flutes, clarinets, first violins, mm. 50-51]

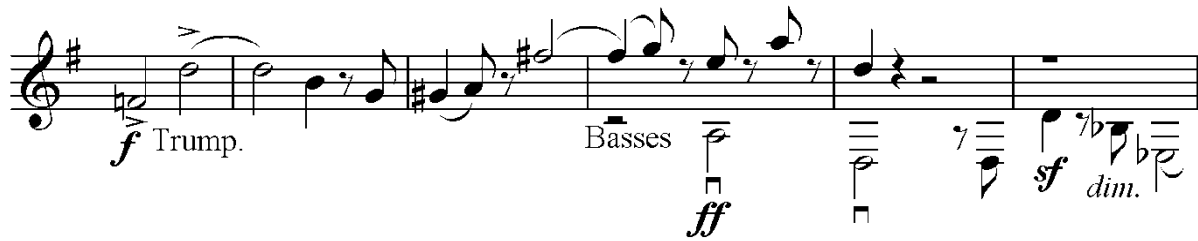
The stubborn harshness of the harmony of this accompanying rhythm, unconcerned with the contours of the theme and raging in willful monotony, together with the horn theme that is based on harsh accents, gives the impression of a ruthlessly storming force. Characteristic are the harsh cross relations of C and C-sharp between the basses and the upper voices at the continuation of the theme, or the juxtaposition of F and F-sharp in the basses and upper voices that almost lie bare in the second measure:



[Example 7-12: first violins and string basses, mm. 58-60]

Mahler had previously used clashes of dissonant intervals, but mostly for purposes of color and in such a combination that the linear friction did not stand out. Here, by contrast, rudeness toward the sonic perception is the obvious intent. The insensitivity of the texture is taken to the extreme. Peculiarities of a late style are revealed that come forward with particular sharpness in the Ninth Symphony.¹³

Initially, the theme remains in the minor sphere. From E minor it turns to [245] B minor and then, exchanging stressed and unstressed beats and building up the rhythmic expression, back to E minor. A bold trumpet turn redirects to D major. The basses confirm the new key by attaching the theme:



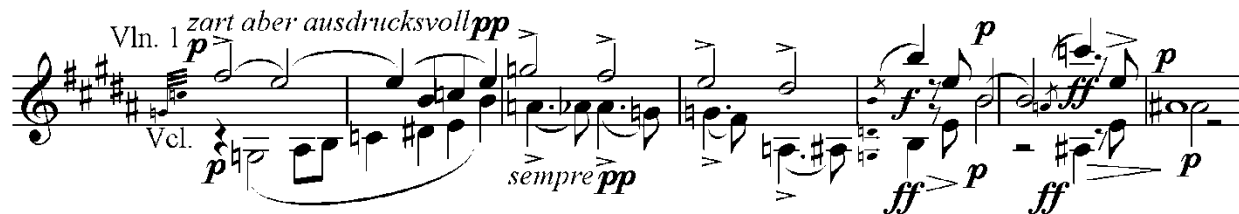
[Example 7-13: trumpet, mm. 72-76; bassoons, cellos, and basses, mm. 75-77]

In the continuation of the bass theme, a familiar echo comes to light: the beginning of the introduction theme with its striking broken rhythms and the downward directed leap of a seventh. From this combination of ideas is formed a new, enthusiastically leaping melody. It is a supplement and counterpart to the first Allegro theme. Related to it in the type of structure and the exclamatory development of a briefly formulated basic rhythmic motive, it is contrasted through emphasis of the vocal melodic line and through its major-key character:



[Example 7-14: violins and horns, mm. 79-86]

Even the key, the warm, almost sumptuous B major, stands as a contrast to the sonically limited, monochromatic E minor. An epilogue, played as a duet between first violins and cellos, leads “tenderly, but expressively” (“zart, aber ausdrucksvoll”) into the *cantabile* realm and concludes again with the jerky major theme:



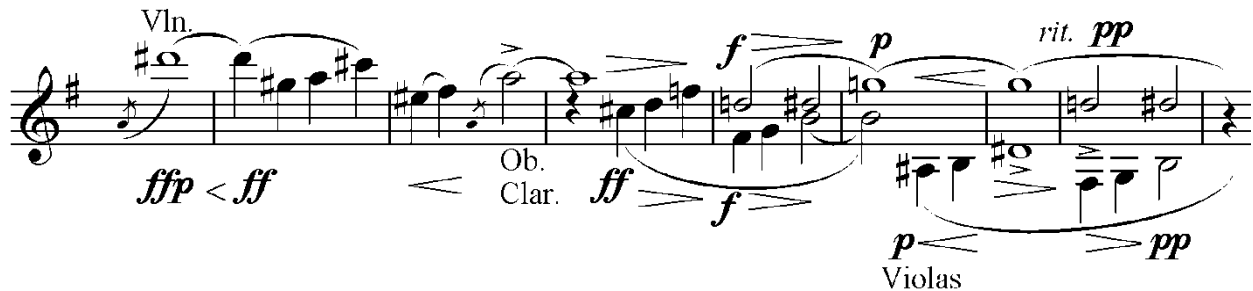
[Example 7-15: first violins and cellos, mm. 92-98]

With strengthened energy, the minor theme enters. Horns, with supporting voices, intone it *fortissimo*, while violins hammer the counter-motive. The roughly striding, powerfully expansive expression is increased even more, the downward directed leap of a fourth broadens to an octave, and the characteristic broken chord of the opening is independently directed further, emerging into the beginning of the major motive:



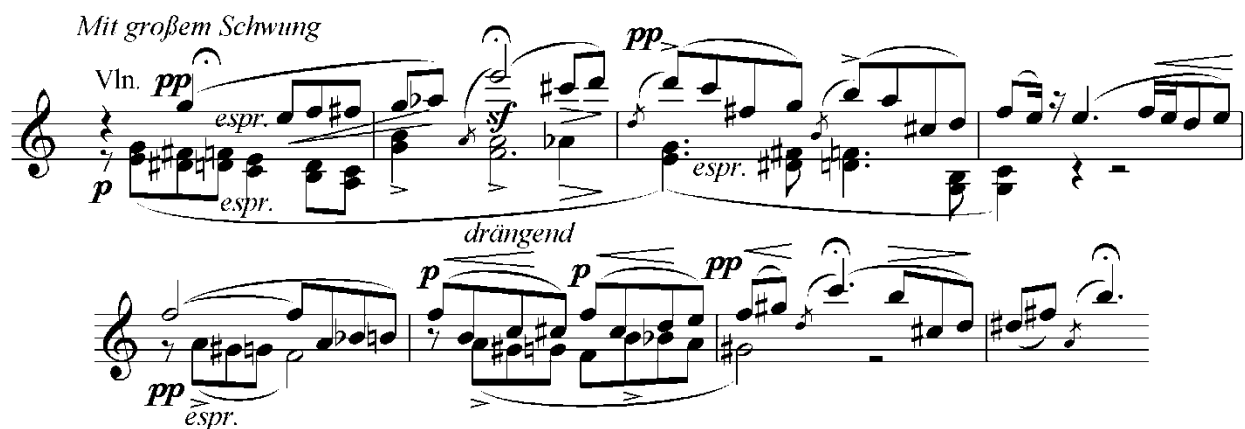
[Example 7-16: horns, doubled by English horn, clarinets, bassoons, violas, cellos, mm. 99-104; horns and trumpet, mm. 105-106]

This now quietly subsides. The tension of the last outbreak abates; the hammering rhythms are softened, E minor transitions into the dominant B major, and the thrusting motives change into widely spun slurs. In the melodic arch of a tender B-major phrase, the violins sink down to an expectant half-close:



[Example 7-17: first and second violins, mm. 110-117 (118); oboes and clarinets, mm. 113-115; violas, mm. 115-117 (118)]

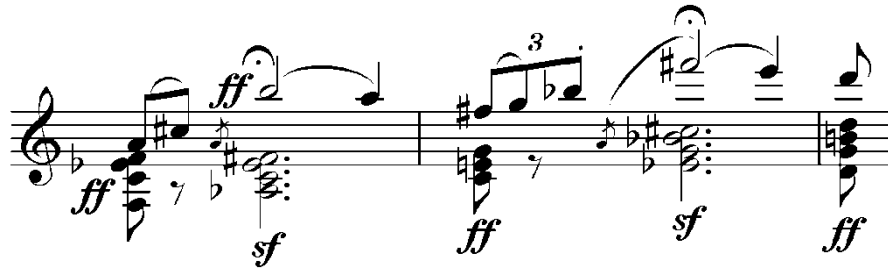
“With great sweep” (“Mit großem Schwung”), but *espressivo* and *pianissimo*, the song theme of the violins begins. It is a homophonically supported melody with an almost effusively [246] enraptured expression.¹⁴ The counterpoint of the horns, led in chromatic thirds, strengthens the mildly sentimental character, while the sensuously warm octave doubling of the second violins, the lack of harmonic inner voices, and the arpeggio accompaniment of the cellos highlights the almost songlike simplicity. The key changes from B major into the bright C major:



[Example 7-18: first violins, first and second horns, mm. 118-125]

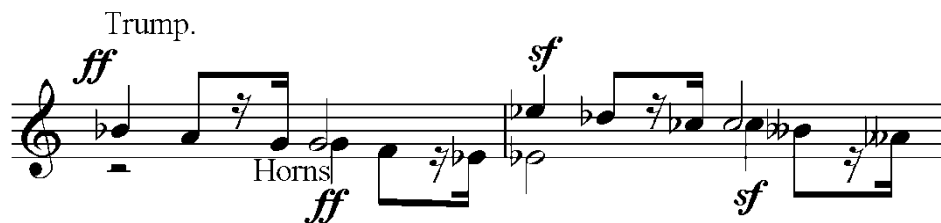
The frequent addition of short, yearning stretches, indicated by Mahler with fermatas, is striking. A comment in the score says about this that “ \frown does not mean a pause, but only an insignificant lengthening; likewise, ‘pressing’ is only a directive for phrasing, and is to be executed very discreetly” (“ \frown bedeuten keinen Halt, sondern nur eine unbedeutende Dehnung, ebenso ist ‘drängend’ nur eine Direktive zur Phrasierung und sehr diskret auszuführen”). The note is important for the execution of Mahlerian performance indications in general. The brilliant practitioner Mahler made the mistake of indicating the finest details, according to his own performance style, in his scores. He did not consider that such exactness brings more dangers than advantages. It tempts the re-creator to be too explicit and ignores the high-handed interpretation of the creator’s will that comes, consciously or unconsciously, with the addition of an outside personality. The result is that Mahler’s descriptions, tempo specifications, performance indications, and also dynamic instructions, which are always only meant to be suggestive, are usually interpreted too strictly, deliberately, and literally, and because of this they are frequently made into crude caricature effects in performance, while he himself, as is also demonstrated by the comment in the score of the Seventh, only wanted to give “directives” and desired a “discreet” execution of such pointers.¹⁵

In this song theme, the lengthening is not only an intensification whose use is exceptional. It becomes an actual factor of the expression, determines the direction of dynamics and contour, and culminates in two augmented sixth chords and their violin suspensions that nearly push the border of affective exaggeration:



[Example 7-19: full orchestral harmonies without highest first violin octave, mm. 132-134]¹⁶

With the turn to G major, the temporary conclusion is reached. A development of this melody does not follow, as the enraptured, sentimental sweep changes into a lusty, striving Allegro. The march melody of the introduction sounds out “quickly” (“flott”), energetically condensed and motivically interlaced by wind voices that outrun one another:



[Example 7-20: 1st trumpet, horns 1 & 2, mm. 136-137, with doubling from trumpets 2 & 3 in m. 136, additional doubling from top voice of cellos, oboes, 1st clarinet, trombones 1 & 2]

As before, the motive shifts sequentially with the harmony and, with the entry of the Tempo primo, finally falls back into the basic harmony of the Allegro movement, E minor.

This is the exposition. The structure shows formal regularity of an almost pedantic kind. The introduction, along with the first and second themes, are placed in succession with such scrupulousness that one could believe to find the maturing Mahler swinging [247] into the academic realm. With a detailed examination, of course, such striking, individual aspects appear that the external correctness only has the effect of a secondary coincidence. The key

relationships are already curious. The main key of the Allegro is E minor, while the introduction begins with the six-five chord on B, turns in passing to B major, and then aims at E minor in its modulating changes. The Allegro theme brings together two contrasting characters: the E-minor theme, “*con fuoco*,” with its harsh rhythmic motion, and the ardently impulsive B-major theme patterned after the introduction. This contrast is significant for the process. It carries sharply pronounced dualism into the first theme and with it, plants the seed therein for later conflicts. The actual song theme, on the other hand, works as a placating balance. It is placed in the key of the lower third, C major, lacks the developmental motivic material, and functions primarily as a contrast. All the more important are the thematic elements of the introduction. It appears here in a new way as a foreshadowing conception of the whole. The external scale is smaller than in earlier works, amounting to just short of 50 measures. Despite this, the introduction contains, with the truly grand unfolding of the first tenor horn solo, the intonation of the march motive, and the gradual divestment of the first theme that propels into the Allegro, not only the conceptual material of the following movement. It reaches beyond that and actually provides, in consequence of the moods that result, a vision of the whole. The fantastic, which lies in the conception of the introduction and which Mahler particularly attempted to grasp in the First Symphony, here becomes an incomparably certain event without robbing the following movement of its own significance. The course of this movement, however, is perhaps best understood from the anticipation of the introduction. The concise, almost objectively dry presentation of the themes in the first part of the Allegro only provides the exposition, the redeployment, so to speak, of the fantastic world of the introduction into thematically tangible

appearances. Their interweaving into an internally based reconstruction of that fantasy world, to their realization in a certain sense, is brought by the development.

It is likewise concisely constructed, condensed into not quite 200 measures. The structure itself can also be easily surveyed. The two-part layout is grouped in such a way that each part comprises roughly half of the whole. In character, the two are sharply divided. The first part, in a lively tempo throughout, brings development of the thematic characters in the sense of the older practice. The second part, beginning with a slowing of the tempo and then broadening it to “Solemn” (“Feierlich”), leads over the sublime B-major intonation of the song theme in preparation for the climax of the movement: the return of the introduction and with it the beginning of the recapitulation in “*grandioso*” E major.¹⁷

Accordingly, the second half of the development is significant for its conceptual aspects, and the first for the force of the thematic development. It begins with a contrapuntally and artistically interwoven resumption of the Allegro theme. It starts with the upbeat from horns and trumpets, a half-measure later in the contrary motion of the violins and oboes, and at the same time, doubly augmented, in the trombones [248]:

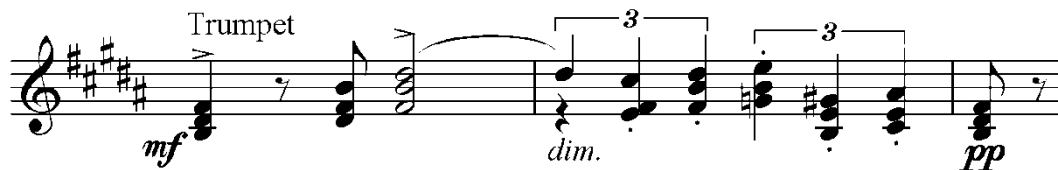
[Example 7-21: trumpet, horns, trombones, oboes, first and second violins, mm. 144-150]

The impetuous impact of this beginning dominates the following section and also remains in authority with respect to character and presentation at the entrance of the second, jubilant half of the theme.¹⁸ This, which comes from the introduction, now experiences a reconversion. In a free transformation, the introductory theme appears in the violins, where the songful line is released into a heavily thrusting motion:



[Example 7-22: first and second violins, mm. 173-188]

Trumpets add an ambitious fanfare-like motive:



[Example 7-23: trumpets, mm. 188-190]

It is the inversion of the introduction's opening, from which the second half of the first theme also originates. This first developmental group also reaches back to the introduction in its closing with the softly after-beating rhythms and the tenor horn solo. There, the fading tenor horn was followed by the slow march. Instead of this, a "Moderato" in gentle B minor enters. In flutes and violas is a rising melody patterned after the song theme, including the opening call that softly sounds through:



[Example 7-24: 1st flute, English horn, mm. 196-201; second flute, solo viola, mm. 197-201]

With a gentle *crescendo*, the new fanfare motive pervading the sound, the melodic phrase presses upward *espressivo* in a chromatic ascent. “Again Tempo primo Allegro” (“Wieder Tempo primo Allegro”), the main theme enters with reinforced strength. The march motive sounds out, building, lengthened and drawn out:



[Example 7-25: horns, mm. 220-225; 1st trumpet, mm. 224-225]

The major-key half of the first theme appears to announce itself. In its place, however, follows the fanfare motive, rhythmically shortened and extended to a thematic period:



[Example 7-26: first violins, mm. 228-229; 1st trumpet, mm. 229-231]¹⁹

Motives of the song theme sound in with exhilaration, and the expression builds to a violent urgency. The march sounds out in forceful chord progressions of the brass choir. Motives of the principal, song, and fanfare themes connect themselves into a line:

[Example 7-27: first violins, mm. 245-252; 1st trumpet, mm. 247-251, first half; 3rd trumpet, m. 251, second half; 1st and 2nd trombones, m. 252] ([249] at penultimate measure of example)

From the trumpets, the opening call is intoned, taken up by trombones, and combined with the march motive:

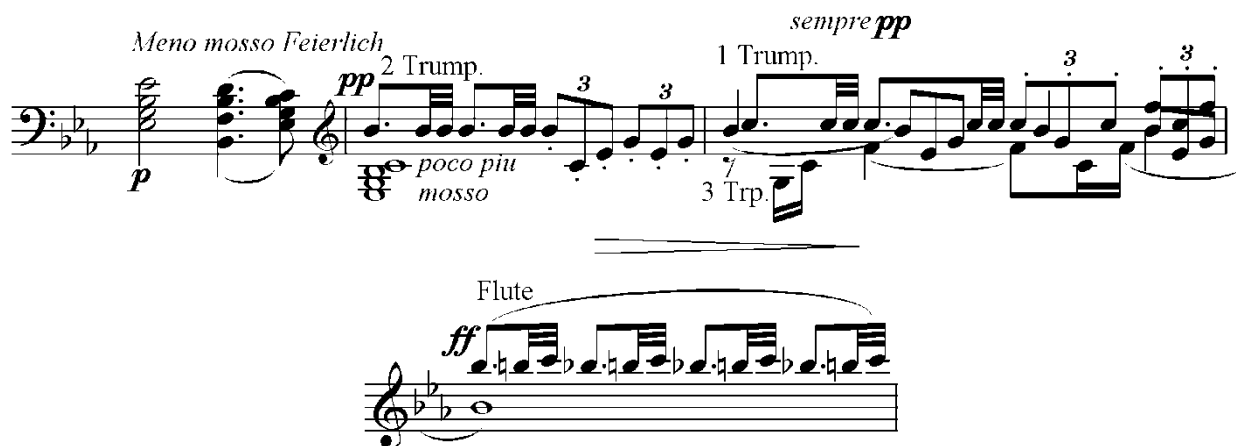
[Example 7-28: 1st trumpet, 1st and 3rd trombone (with bassoon doubling), 1st flute (with doubling from 1st oboe, E-flat clarinet, and first violins), mm. 253-255]²⁰

With the shrill-sounding augmented triad on B-flat, the buildup suddenly falters. The themes have entangled themselves in each other, and the development has run hot. A climax is reached out of which no path leads further, and the line breaks off. Only a gentle *tremolo* B-flat in the high violins continues to hum. The first trumpet strikes a quiet B-flat in a signal-like rhythm, from which the third [sic]²¹ trumpet sounds out the enticing motive, “somewhat prominently” (“etwas hervortretend”).²²



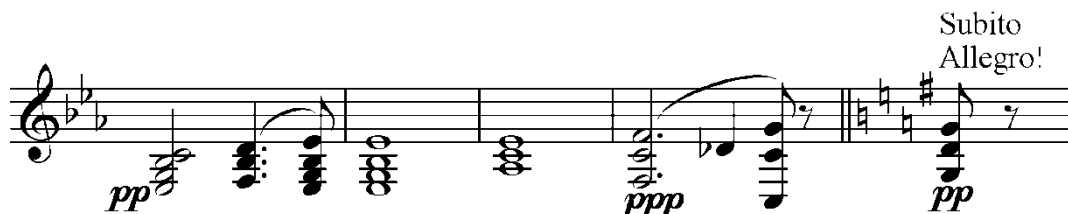
[Example 7-29: 2nd trumpet, mm. 257-258]

The first section of the development has come to an end. It has brought an increase of energy, but no consequence. A change of mood. “Meno mosso,” mysteriously “Solemn” (“Feierlich”)—a chorale-like tune in dark colors: fourfold divided violas and cellos supported by bassoons and clarinets and over them only the high *tremolo* B-flat of the first violins. The tune sounds out secretively, interrupted by quiet trumpet fanfares and the enticing motive, like a bird call, in the flute. The introductory call in inversion also sounds like a greeting from the recently abandoned world of day into the twilight:



[Example 7-30: violas, cellos, trumpets, flutes, mm. 258-261 (no trumpets in m. 258)]

It is the march theme of the introduction which, through this “solemn” transformation, has a conciliatory effect upon the motives of the development. It now expands itself into a three-part chorale line:



[Example 7-31: low strings (violas, cellos, basses), mm. 262-266]²³

Quietly as it has arrived, the solemn manifestation then dissolves again. “Subito Allegro,” yet “somewhat calmly” (“ziemlich ruhig”), the Allegro theme is now heard in an altered character, freed from all that is stormy and harsh, soft and almost elegiac in the English horn, supplemented by a tender counterpoint in the principal solo violin. A delicate soloistic play of voices commences. The idyllic G-major sound is held firm as first violins, and additionally flute and

oboe enter. Like chamber music, the episode spins itself out as the march motive, once again altered, provides the primary sound:



[Example 7-32: cellos and basses with bassoon doubling, mm. 284-288 (low C omitted from second chord (second beat) of m. 287)]

Suddenly, there is a glaring flash. “Bells in the air, quasi trumpets” (Schalltrichter auf, quasi Trompetten”), the inverted introduction motive, *fortissimo*, in three clarinets:



[Example 7-33: clarinets, mm. 296-297]

A whispering violin *tremolo* and quiet fanfares. Then again the strident trumpet call of the clarinets. Now, “very sustained” (“sehr gehalten”), once again the “solemn” (“feierlich”) strings and winds that sound like an organ. Horns take up the chorale in A major, while “very softly blown” (“sehr weich geblasene”) trombones lead [250], with a turn that builds to an almost celestial transfiguration, to B major. “Fading away” (“Verklingend”), the calling motive of the trumpets, now overcome and stripped of its provocative character, sounds into the chorale lines, which, “very solemnly” (“sehr feierlich”) and “even more held back” (“noch mehr zurückhaltend”), flow into the blossoming B major of the song theme. “Very broadly” (“Sehr breit”), it is intoned by divided violins in a powerfully rising octave sweep, carried by undulating

arpeggios in the low strings.²⁴ In the horns, the first theme is heard as a supplement, likewise transposed to major, the stormy motion transformed into tender pathos:



[Example 7-34: horns, mm. 319-321]

Under this, the march motive, lying in the trombones, is also reinterpreted into sublime religiosity, while the fanfare call sounds in the trumpets in triple *piano*. As if swelling from emotion in the face of a natural wonder that has finally opened up, the expression rises. Incessantly urging, yet nowhere grazing the limit of passion, it strives toward a powerful B-major cadence. It is a direct portent of the Eighth Symphony, of the “superna gratia” and “omne pessimum” of the first part, and the “noch blendet ihn der neue Tag” of the second part. In mighty breaths, taking in forces up to the most extreme emotional tension, the cadence flows, hymn-like into the Adagio of the introduction.

The development is at an end, but it has not brought the greatest intensification. This is assigned to the reprise with an artistry that had not yet been reached even by Mahler himself. The puzzle of the prelude is solved, and the veils of that mystical introduction fall. The muffled, gripping rhythms and six-five harmonies again sound, and again, now initially from the cello, resounds the strange opening call. But now the answer is in B major, rising up in the trombones with “grand tone, but softly blown” (“großer Ton, aber weich geblasen”):



[Example 7-35: trombones, mm. 340-342]

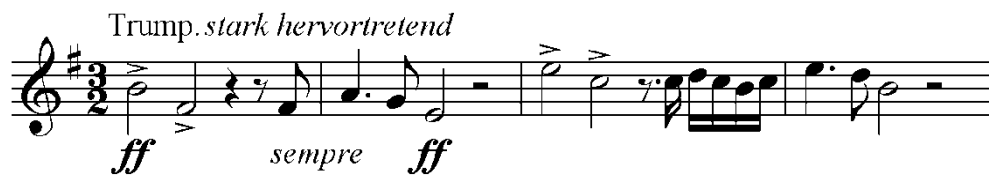
It points back to the second theme from the Finale of the Sixth, related in mood and almost identical in rhythm and linear direction. The tenor horn enters, likewise “with grand tone” (“mit großem Ton,” for the moment continuing to increase the tension, carried by the full orchestra in the most intense fullness of sound:



[Example 7-36: tenor horn, mm. 343-345]

Dramatic trombone calls come from the depths, and the cadence over the dominant seventh chord on F-sharp broadens as if into the infinite, then flows over into the renewed B major of the song theme. The tempo becomes more fluid and “passionate” (“leidenschaftlich”) as a mighty chordal *tremolo* resounds from the string section, fanfares resound, and the first E-minor Allegro with augmented main theme begins. Yet it is not the desired goal, and becomes only the last step of the great buildup. With overwhelming splendor, the “Grandioso” shines forth: the Allegro theme, in E major from the full orchestra, with a doubly augmented rhythmic beginning.²⁵ An elemental force that achieves its revelation through compulsive urging. The major sphere is achieved. The life that had previously been fulfilled by the Allegro now roars up again. The

jubilant second half of the theme follows in B major, then the song theme. Transposed to G major, it appears without the sentimental fermatas in the melody, more aware of its strength, carried by the feeling of a [251] grand experience, driving further. With rushing, swarming violin runs, it steers toward E major, the key of fulfillment.²⁶ Now, “fresh” (“frisch”), the inexorable, incisive march motive. The reprise approaches its conclusion, the last uttermost intensification. The meter changes from a two-beat *alla breve* to $3/2$ time. “Very prominently” (“Stark hervortretend”), the theme in trumpets and trombones, rhythmically expanded, takes on imperative aspects:



[Example 7-37: 1st trumpet with 1st trombone, mm. 495-498]

Sumptuous woodwind figurations play around it, while strings accompany in festive chords, then lead the continuation of the line themselves, giving it a broad concluding sweep, until the thematic call resounds from all choirs of the full orchestra like an enormous, vanquishing command. Then the *stretta*: Tempo primo, Allegro. The *alla breve* returns again, and the theme rushes forth in its original form in strings and woodwinds. Horns “blare” (“schmettern”), trumpets blow the fanfare. Victoriously, the last metallic wind chords rise up to E major in broad grandeur. The jubilant opening call provides the last sound.

This movement is an experience of nature. It is this experience in the idea that one can only suggest if one does not wish to coarsen it. It is likewise this experience in the logic of its formal construction, the artistry of its thematic conception and integration. Unifying the most

simple and the most complex, it shows a power of construction that could only be applied by a full artistic nature standing upon the height of creativity. Here is a fullness which constantly appears to overflow and yet, in contrast to many other moments in Mahler's output, has nothing violent or whipped up. The whole is elementally felt, devised in one stroke, of overwhelming uniformity. That this uniformity works further, all the way into the Finale, will become manifest. Here, for the time being, closes the first part of the symphony, the first day piece, the revelation of the light. There follow the three night pieces.

Characteristic of the opposition of the outer and inner movements is, besides the formal differences, the choice of keys. The first movement is an E-major piece, beginning in the dominant key, the first half of the Allegro held in E minor, then achieving E major as a resolution. The Finale is a C-major piece, without the captivating warmth of the first movement, but providing a celebratory, vigorous mood. These are the day pieces, the framing movements. The three night music pieces are all in flat keys. The first is a C-minor movement, with C-major interludes, alternating like the twilight. The second, immersed in shadowy darkness, is a Scherzo in D minor. The third is an F-major idyll, like a serenade in layout and mood. Common to all three is the romantic color, and correspondingly common is the tone of the past, for the composer a falling back upon earlier areas of expression. In the first night music is revived one more time, for the last time, the type of the Mahlerian march song, as it had reigned over the *Wunderhorn* time. The piece appears as if it were brought over from the previous creative decade. In tone and layout, it displays echoes of Mahler's greatest creation in the genre of the march song, of "Revelge," [252], but without the demonic overtone.²⁷ Yet one perceives, despite a similarity of

melodic formation, formal shaping, and color, the freedom of creative fantasy that has been won in the meantime. In this respect, Mahler is in this piece as in the second night music a conscious artist. The experience lies far behind him, and he plays with form and expression. From this game, however, speaks nevertheless a deep inward confession of yearning humanity that looks out dreamily from under the archaizing mask.

A nature piece with an enchanting fantasy of mood precedes the songlike main movement as an introduction. Two horns begin in a dialogue, one loudly “calling” (“rufend”) in major and one “answering” (“antwortend”), muted, in minor:

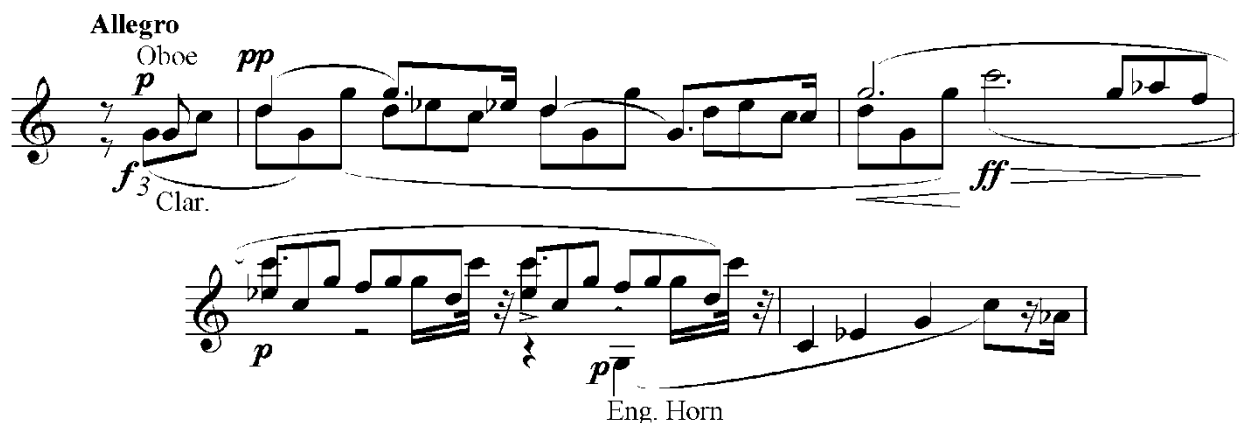
Allegro moderato

1 Horn *rufend* *f* *verklingend* 3 Horn *mit Dampf.* *p* *antwortend* 1 Horn *rufend* *f*

fp *fp* 3 Horn *p* *antwortend* 1 Horn *verklingend* *rufend*

[Example 7-38: 1st and 3rd horns, mm. 1-9 with upbeat]

The last answer fails to appear. The clarinet takes up the calling motive, leads it further in the manner of a reed pipe, and the oboe joins in with a quiet counterpoint. Into this duet of the two pastoral voices sounds, as from a distance, the opening call in minor:



[Example 7-39: clarinet and oboe, mm. 9-12; English horn, mm. 12-13]

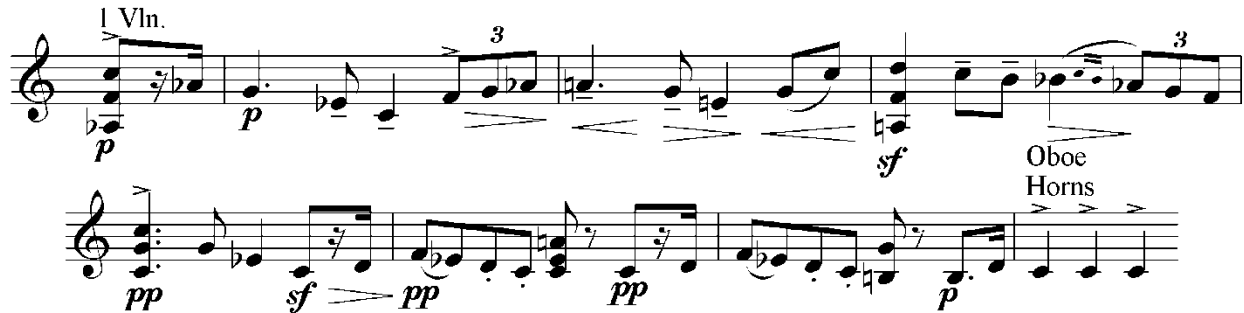
It is like an awakening call that brings silent nature to live. An unusual life of sound unfolds: quiet flute and bassoon trills, chordally undulating and thrusting bird call-like nature motives of clarinets and oboes, harp-like broken *pizzicato* harmonies of strings, and resounding bell-like horn chords. Under this, from the dark depths, expressively struggling toward the surface is the previous call in the tuba. A sudden lightning-like flash of C major in the full orchestra, and then, after a brief pause, a likewise sudden chromatic crash and a rustling disappearance in the bass regions.²⁸ Over this, “Tempo subito, Andante molto moderato,” a folk-like march tune enters forcefully in the horns. It begins similarly to the awakening call. “Very measured” (“Sehr gemessen”), the nocturnal procession approaches, with strictly closed rhythm and a simple singing melody. Curious here is the vacillation between major and minor, the alternation of the major and minor third in the upper voice as well as the accompanying harmony.²⁹ Horns provide the romantic forest mood, and a cello line that enters imitatively highlights the dissonant modulation to B-flat minor. Struck “*col legno*,” ghostly accompanying rhythms clatter in the second violins. Thus the melody quietly draws forth, wavering between dream and reality, half major, half minor, half friendly idyll, half terrifying nightmare:

Andante molto moderato Sehr gemessen



[Example 7-40: 1st horn, mm. 29-37, with some harmonies of 2nd and 3rd horns in mm. 30-33]

[253] Violins take over the epilogue. It also remains in the half-light of the major-minor mood:



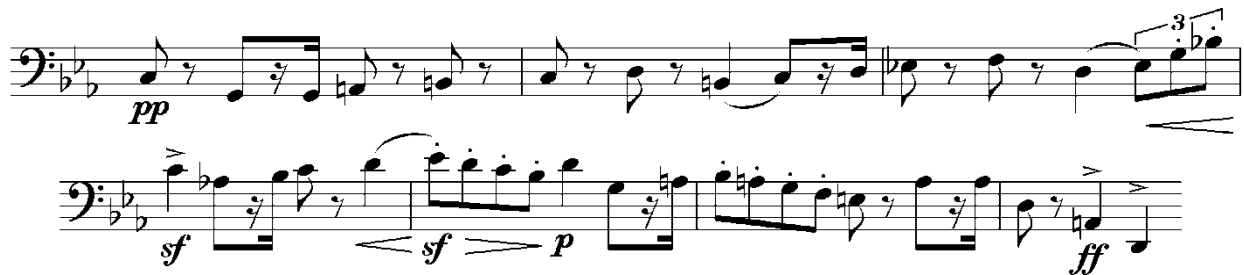
[Example 7-41: first violins, mm. 37-43, oboes and horn, m. 44]

Now the mood sinks completely down into minor. The accompanying rhythm beats quietly in the horns:



[Example 7-42: horn, mm. 48-49]

Basses and contrabassoon grope their way alone, *pianissimo*:



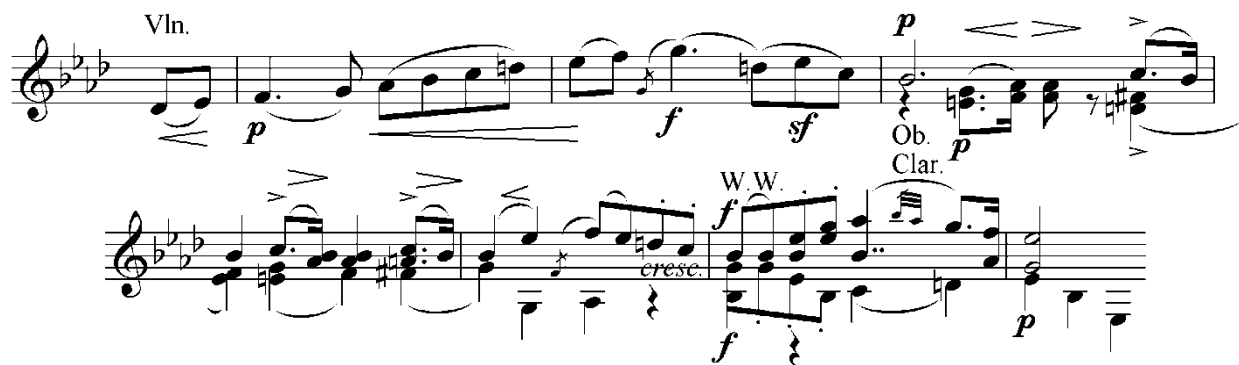
[Example 7-43: basses, mm. 48-54, contrabassoon, mm. 48-51, bassoon, mm. 51-54]

The interlude is repeated. Horns and violin *pizzicati* provide harmonic filling that is reminiscent of the orchestral sound of “Revelge” in its concise, suggestive style. The march song begins anew, this time assigned to the full string orchestra, pervaded by sounds of stopped horns and swirled about by the introductory triplet motive of the woodwinds. It is almost the effect of a ghostly troop of guards which, called up from the depths, passes by with its band playing and then disappears again in the darkness. A trio-like A-flat-major melody is heard, presented by gently singing cellos supported by simple bass *pizzicati*:



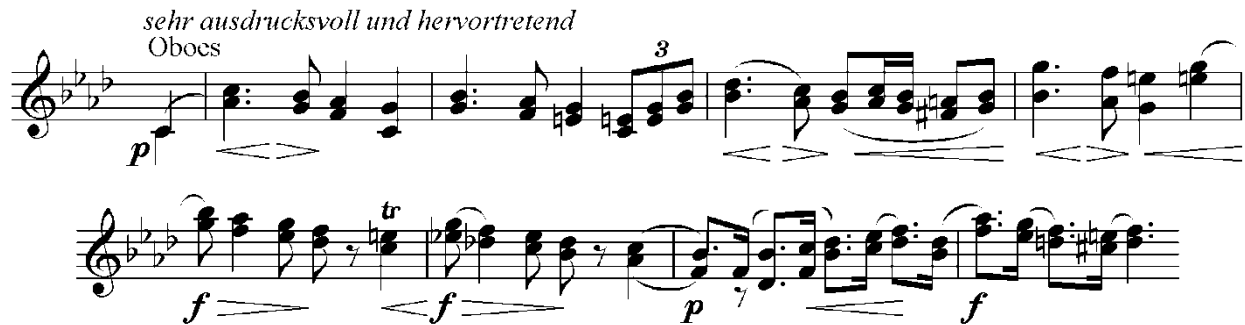
[Example 7-44: cellos, mm. 82-88 (top half only, mm. 87-88), basses, mm. 83-84]

Violins sweepingly take up the melody and woodwinds provide the close in a *scherzando* manner and in old-fashioned gracefulness:



[Example 7-45: first violins, mm. 88-95, oboes and clarinets, mm. 91-93, beat 1, flutes, oboes, and clarinets, mm. 94-95, basses (and cellos), mm. 93-95]

This tune is also repeated songfully in the violins an octave higher, while woodwinds add a lightly lilting counterpoint. Then woodwinds and horns alone continue to sound, melodically expanding and varying the motives in a flirtatious game. A liberating, almost serene mood spreads out without destroying the fundamental dreamlike character. In a sudden termination of this, the voices lose themselves in quiet A-flat minor. Only the opening call of the horn resounds again out into the emptiness. Cowbells, the symbol of removal from the earth, are heard in the answer.³⁰ Call and response mix their sounds into each other, as if they do not understand, and trail off without closure. The interrupted A-flat-major march sounds once more, then cellos and basses lead back to the return of the first procession. This time, the reed pipe triplet accompaniment is assigned to the low strings, while woodwinds and horns have the melodic lead. The patrol only passes by one time and dies away in the basses. Through the gloomy F minor shines a C from violins and flutes and bird call-like trills in oboes [254] and clarinets on the fifth C-G. In the oboes is a wistfully singing melody in thirds, “very expressive and prominent” (“sehr ausdrucksvoll und hervortretend”):



[Example 7-46: oboes, mm. 164-172]

It rises to poignant accents with a passionately moving epilogue:



[Example 7-47: oboes, mm. 172-176, flutes, mm. 176-177]

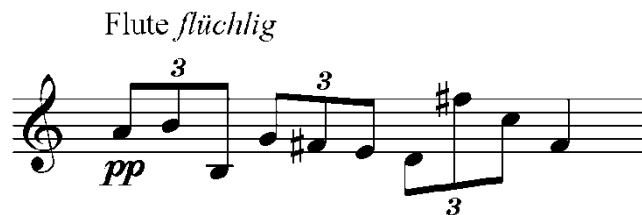
The reed pipe motives of the beginning quietly press forward, the awakening call sounds out from trumpet and violins, minor and major intermingle, all voices twitter and trill, and over the *fortissimo* awakening call, sounding in minor, radiates the bright C major of upward rushing harp sounds. But it does not hold and is drawn back to C minor. *Molto espressivo*, the melancholy tune of the oboes is reviewed in cellos, oboe, and English horn. Its passionately lamenting epilogue builds to a “garish” (“grell”) *fortissimo*. The sharp reed instruments, oboes and English horn, dominate, flutes and violins are absent, and the reed pipe motive, thrusting forcefully, sounds only from the clarinets. The monotonously hammering accompanying rhythm is in the bassoons, with deep strings, stopped horns, and harp providing the fundamentally dark coloration.

This group also vanishes quietly. In the basses is the groping internal motive of the first march, now in B minor:



[Example 7-48: cellos and basses, mm. 212-213]

In the flute, “fleetingly” (“flüchtig”), as if blown over from the distance, is the reed flute motive:



[Example 7-49: flute, m. 213]

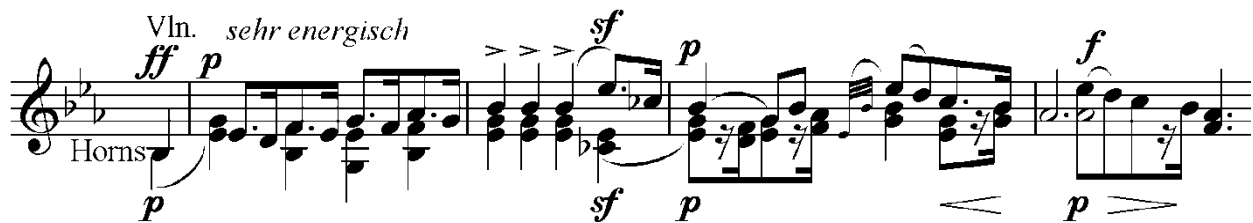
The basses insecurely search further, as if they wished to take up the interrupted march tune again, do not find the right tone, and become silent. In G major, B-flat major, and B major, trumpet, oboe, and clarinet attempt to come back to the opening melody with antiphonal calls



[Example 7-50: trumpet, oboe, clarinet, mm. 217-221]

It is in vain. Flutes take up the call, and B major rises to the augmented triad on G. Suddenly, the beginning has again been achieved, and the march melody rises up in *forte* of the full

orchestra, unifying the woodwind choir, horns, and strings. “Very energetically” (“Sehr energisch”), the strings turn in the ninth measure to E-flat major, horns accompanying in a leisurely wandering folk style:



[Example 7-51: second violins, violas, horns, mm. 230-234]

Only the grotesque closing with its shrill cries restores again the spooky mood, mingled with something sinister:



[Example 7-52: flutes, piccolo, oboes, mm. 243-245]

The C-minor bass theme again gropes forward, accompanied by the rattling rhythm and played about by the reed flute motive, which is muted down to a violin whisper. The A-flat-major melody again sounds out, lightly altered and [255] assigned to the violins, decorated by woodwinds with a rapturous counter melody:



[Example 7-53: violins, flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 261-266]

Similar to the first time, more richly figured and embellished in details, the voices sound and undulate, then fade away in A-flat major.³¹ The last chord is no longer audible. It is blown away by the horn call which, *forte* but muted, brings the mood of the introduction again. “Very measured” (“Sehr gemessen”), almost somewhat heavy, the old march motives are heard from the basses and woodwinds. Thematic portions join one another, but no longer combine themselves into a closed melody as they make a recovery, break off again, roughly crash about from there, as with forced strength, and fall quickly back into shadows. The procession has passed, and only the last sounds are heard from the distance. The horn call once again, *pianissimo*, and over it flutes and clarinets “like bird voices” (“wie Vogelstimmen”). Dawn? Awakening of the day? Reed flute motives, trills, storming of the clarinets with a forceful evasion to D-flat major under a flute trill on G that is stretched over them, blazing C major in the trumpets, and a final decay in C minor. In a violin *pizzicato*, the reed flute motive flutters away and sinks to the depths in the cellos. A violin trill evaporates to inaudibility. Then dull beats of the cymbal and tam-tam. In a “long” (“lange”) fading high harmonic G of the cellos, the vision of the nocturnal procession slips away.³²

“Shadowy” (“*Schattenhaft*”) is the heading of the third movement. Mahler’s performance indications say everything. That which was still concrete, so to speak, in the march rhythm of the second movement, although it was a fantastical appearance, dissolves into a disembodied play of shadows in the $\frac{3}{4}$ time of the Scherzo. The piece begins without a clearly defined theme. Only a rhythmic existence urges and gathers itself, gradually taking on a melodic contour, until a theme emerges in the thirteenth measure.³³ Timpani and bass *pizzicati* begin, thumping closely behind one another. Low horns, then clarinets and flutes in dark registers, are added. The measure is divided so that each group strikes on one of the quarter-note beats and the motion swells up, as it were, from all sides. Bases press from B-flat chromatically upward to C-sharp, and the *crescendo* culminates in a rushing, chasing beat of the dominant A in the timpani:

Schattenhaft

Timp. Timp. Timp. Horns Clar. Flutes
 p p p *pp* *p* *p* *sf* *p*
 Bass Bass cresc. f f Timp.

[Example 7-54: timpani, cellos and basses, horns, clarinets, flutes, mm. 1-12, with upbeat]

Now the theme is unfurled in motivic phrases that are broken off in each measure, as if breathlessly thrust out, only obtaining form through periodic repetition:

1 Vln. mit Dämpfer ("muted")

pp *pp* *sf* *pp* *sf*

Vcl. *pp*

[Example 7-55: muted first violins and cellos, mm. 13-18 (before cello entrance in m. 18)]

[256] The motion becomes “gradually somewhat more flowing” (“allmählich etwas fließender”), second violins, violas, and string basses are added, and the woodwind group is also released melodically. The voices swallow and weave into each other. A sudden sweep of the violins up a diminished seventh to F continues further to a shrill, incisive C-sharp:

[Example 7-56: first violins, mm. 20-25; second violins and flutes, mm. 20-22; violas, mm. 20-23; oboes, mm. 24-25; clarinets, mm. 26-27]³⁴

The lower voices surge stormily upward, then the motion plunges quickly downward again in dissonant, overlapping intervals:

[Example 7-57: first and second violins, mm. 29-34]

The four last, storming introductory measures are repeated, with increased instrumentation.

Varied in sound and figuration, the theme is heard in violins and violas, over which spans a *molto espressivo* “lamenting” (“klagend”) song of flutes and oboes:



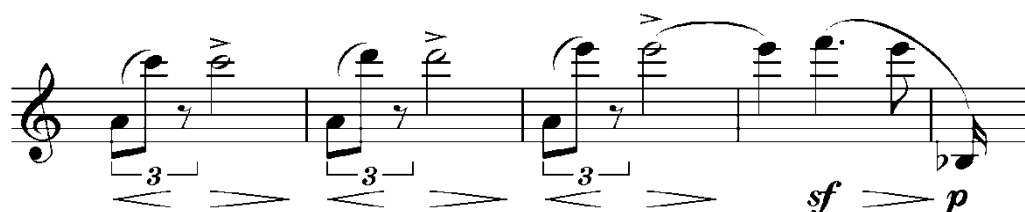
[Example 7-58: 1st and 4th flutes, oboes, mm. 38-52]

The tune maintains a strange midpoint between lament and dance, and it changes, after the minor-key period has been sung out, into a half high-spirited, half wildly desperate dance melody:



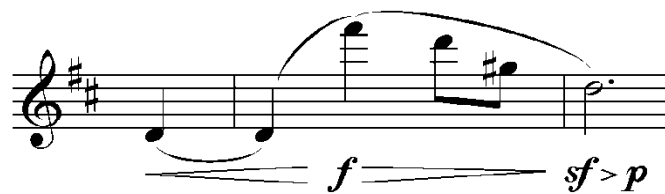
[Example 7-59: first and second violins, mm. 53-66]

In powerful intervallic leaps of the violins, it builds to a forced upswing, only then to slide back to minor in a sudden fall:³⁵



[Example 7-60: first violins, mm. 68-72 (with second violins, mm. 71-72)]

The major-key intermezzo was a hallucination, a whipping of the imagination to wild merriment upon a dark minor-key foundation. The illusion does not stand up, for the minor-key drive continues to bubble inaudibly and, after being briefly drowned out, breaks through anew, more agitated than before. The triplets churn, and the “lamenting” (“klagend”) voice only sounds in cut-off calls. Once again the dance tune attempts to assert itself as minor and major struggle with each other. Flaring *sforzati* and whispering rustlings of the voices alternate without mediation as all instruments are drawn into the whirlpool of contrasts. With a garish shriek of delight the violins suddenly break off:



[Example 7-61: first violins, mm. 154-156]

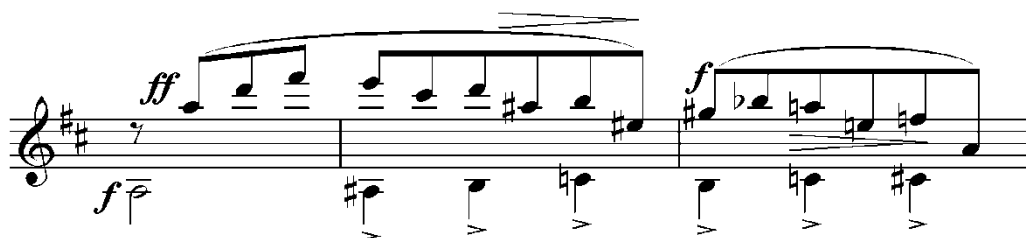
A crashing run of the woodwinds fades into the depths as the voices quietly unravel themselves. In the D minor of the opening, the main movement dies away.³⁶

With the first measure of the Trio, a new image lights up. Again D major, but this time different than within the Scherzo. No major over a minor basis that glimmers through, no forceful surge, but rather genuinely enchanting, idyllic major sounds. A songful melody is intoned by a four-voice woodwind choir: [257] oboes, clarinet, and bassoon. *Pianissimo* trills of the horn and the violins quietly penetrate into it. The melody, with its accompaniment of natural intervals, is reminiscent in character of the post horn solo in the Third Symphony. Like that, it has a charming, folksong-like shape:



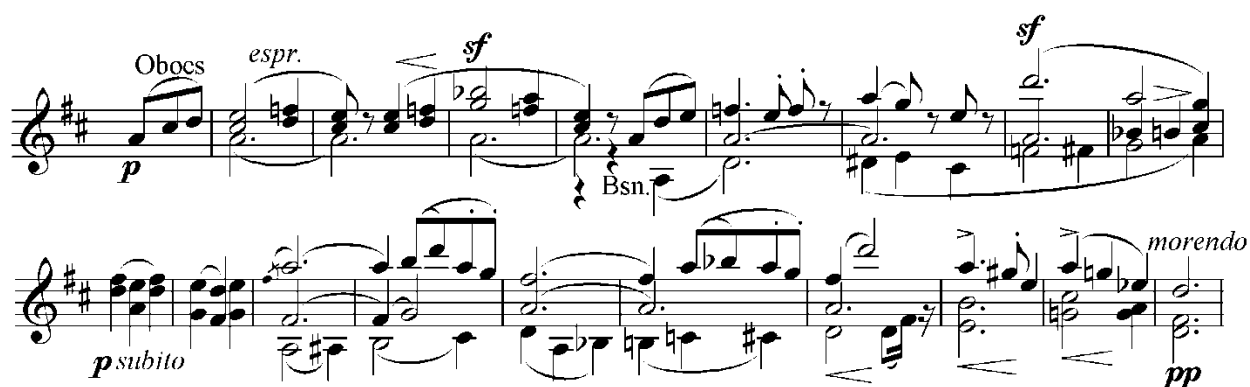
[Example 7-62: oboes, clarinet, mm. 179-185]

Like an echo of the Scherzo, *più mosso subito*, an inserted motive of the strings, rushing in chromatic double movement, interrupts the song:



[Example 7-63: flutes, first and second violins with violin solo, mm. 185-187]

The song continues on undeterred, only it appears temporarily bent toward minor, and only the conclusion sounds again in pure major:



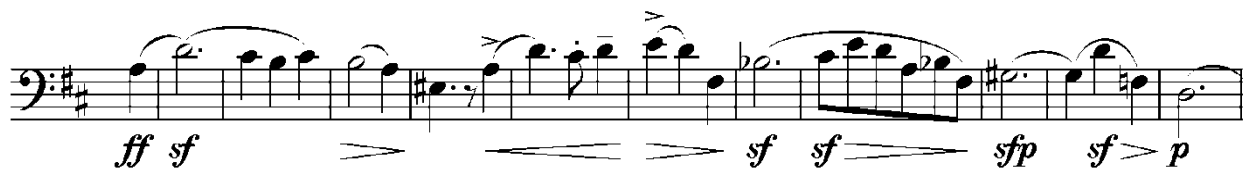
[Example 7-64: oboes and bassoon, mm. 188-206]

It is a sweet melancholy in this song, a remembrance of the distant happiness that appears when longed for in the mirror of pure harmony. Even the inserted chromatic motive is drawn into the liberating mood. It attaches itself to the rocking bass motive that is reminiscent of the first movement:



[Example 7-65: solo viola, cellos, mm. 210-212]

A broad D-major cadence sounds out in the epilogue of the cellos:



[Example 7-66: cellos, mm. 246-257]

The melody fades into minor. “Again as at the beginning” (“Wieder wie am Anfang”), the triplet motives of the strings. After a few D-minor measures they turn toward E-flat minor. The sharpening of the key by a half-step gives a demonic aspect to the ghostly scampering of the strings and the quiet singing of the “lamenting” (“klagend”) oboe spread above them. The E-flat-minor episode breaks off shortly, and the main section of the Scherzo unrolls for the second time in the original key, the “lamenting” (“klagend”) voice, the wild impertinence of the D-major dance—everything as before. Once again, the harmony becomes gloomy. B-flat minor now provides the basic color, and the oboes sing the lament *fortissimo*. Stopped horns, wildly

ascending shouts of joy in the violins, harsh harmonies, and “screaming” (“kreischend”), plummeting wind runs. Then a terrible *pizzicato* beat of the cellos and string basses in quintuple *forte*, “plucked so strongly that the strings strike the wood” (“so stark anreißen, daß die Saiten an das Holz anschlagen”). A pause. Scherzo motives of the beginning rapidly swell in dynamics. The last dance. “Wildly” (“Wild”), the D-major waltz of the Scherzo is played by woodwinds and imitating violins, and added to this in trombones and tuba, with crude force, is the tender epilogue of the trio.³⁷ Horns accompany with rough after-beats, and the string basses are similarly “*martellato*.” It is an orgy of unleashed demons. Almost to the end, the dance rhythms sound. Harsh, dissonant wind chords, major, minor, and augmented [258] triads mixed together, provide the harmonic color. Suddenly plunging wind runs, interrupted by dance rhythms. Then a brief pause. A beat from timpani and a lingering, violently plucked *pizzicato* chord of the violas—and the game is over.

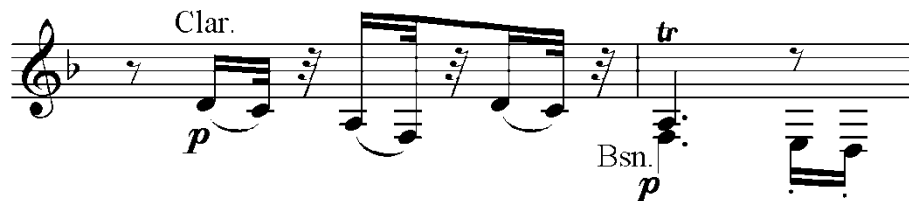
The fantastic procession of the guard in the first night music and the shadowy spooks of the Scherzo are followed by the second “night music” (“Nachtmusik”) as the third piece of this cycle, headed “Andante amoroso.” Here as well, the performance indication provides the poetic character. The instrumentation speaks even more eloquently. Two new string instruments are brought into use: the guitar, which provides resonant, harp-like harmonies and bell-like individual notes, and the mandolin, with pointedly tremulous, murmuring sounds, the instrument of the serenade.³⁸ The harp completes this trio. It sonically illustrates the serenade-like character of this movement, just as it is expressively represented by the yearning, swelling, intimate melodic lines. A four-bar introduction, which continues to return like a refrain, opens the

movement “with an upward sweep” (“mit Aufschwung”). The solo violin leads, and only the string quartet is used. The melodic phrase with its rapturous octave arch has in structure as well as in linear direction a similarity to Schumann’s “Abendlied”.³⁹



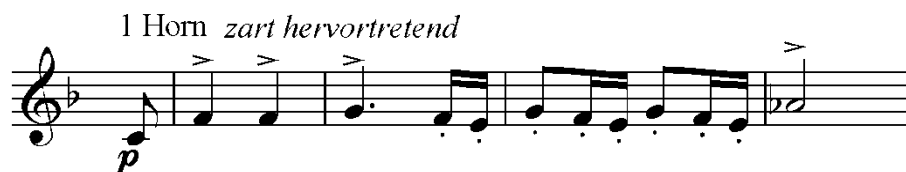
[Example 7-67: solo violin and strings, mm. 1-3 with upbeat]

Now the play begins. Harp and guitar chords are the prelude and a lightly rippling accompanying voice in the clarinet with a response in the bassoon are added:



[Example 7-68: clarinet and bassoon, mm. 4-5]

“Gently coming forward” (“Zart hervortretend”), the horn melody sounds out, intimately secretive, tenderly eloquent, in its softly beating opening and its stepwise upward pressing continuation a true serenade song:



[Example 7-69: horn, mm. 7-11]

As if faltering, after a threefold statement of the G, it only achieves the evasive, questioning A-flat and breaks off. From the oboe sounds a delicate counterpoint, gracefully bending itself downward:



[Example 7-70: oboe, mm. 11-17]

For the second time, the horn begins the song, falters for the second time at the A-flat, but this time leads the A-flat-major line further. The harmony evasively moves toward G-flat major, but the upward sweeping motive restores the F-major mood and solidifies it by means of an *espressivo* melody of the violins:

1 Vln. *pp* *espr.*

Oboe *f* *pp*

Vcl. *f*

mit Aufschwung pp

[Example 7-71: first violins and oboe, mm. 27-37]

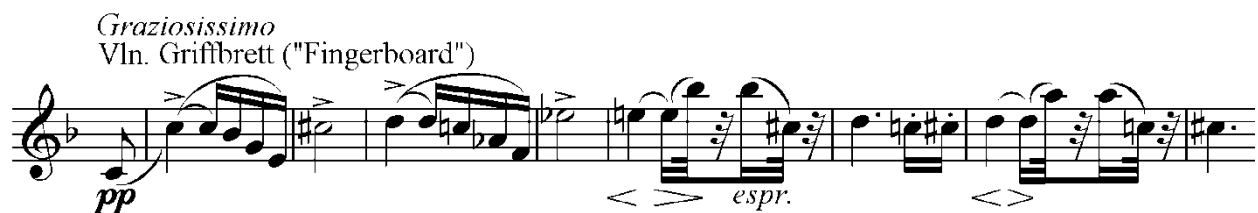
The horn begins for the third time. Now the continuation of the line reaches A, to which a tenderly streaming epilogue is added:

Horn

p *mf* *fp* *pp*

[Example 7-72: 1st horn, mm. 37-46]

[259] Mandolin and harp accompany the brief closing passage. The upward sweeping motive, coming forward *fortissimo* with full intensity in a high register, closes the first solo. An epilogue, “*graziosissimo*,” is added. The guitar provides the bass, and quietly upward pressing chords of the second violins and violas provide the airy harmonic middle layer. Over this, rocking gracefully in chromatic turns, violin figurations are played *espressivo*, but very tenderly on the fingerboard:



[Example 7-73: first violins, mm. 55-63]

The arabesques spin themselves further and, lightly swelling, the inversion of the horn song sounds in the basses:



[Example 7-74: cellos and basses, mm. 72-75]

In a melodic continuation, the oboe takes it up:



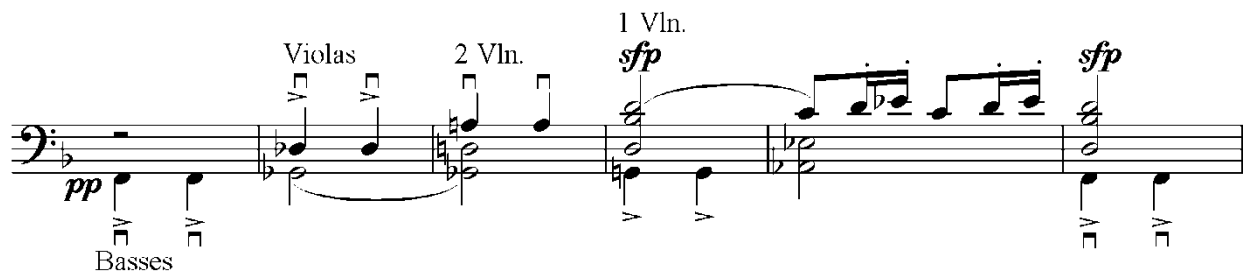
[Example 7-75: oboe, mm. 76-79]

The F-major idyll peacefully sings itself out:⁴⁰



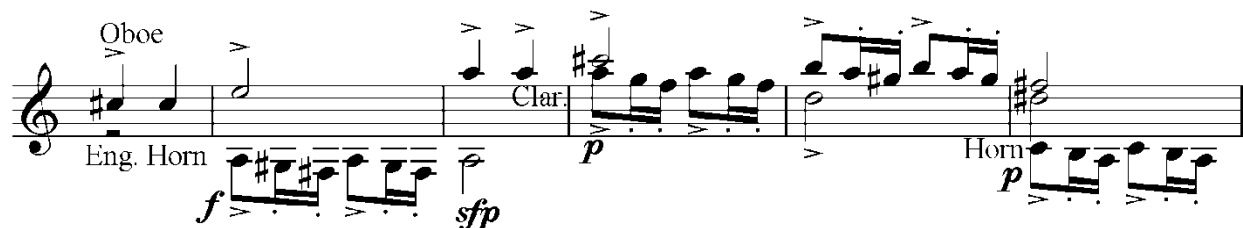
[Example 7-76: flutes, mm. 93-99]

Now the voices are silent.⁴¹ The basses attempt to hold firm to the horn motive, but they only bring it to a chromatic displacement and darkening:



[Example 7-77: strings (with plucked string support), mm. 99-104]

Inverting the motive, woodwinds answer, supported by the mandolin, from the upper regions:



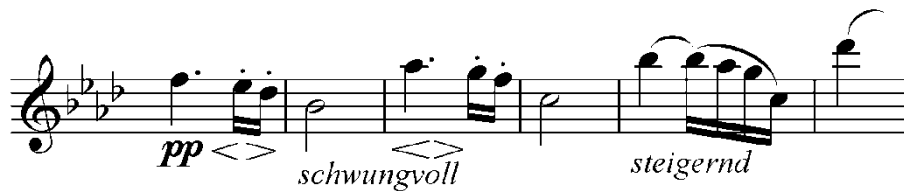
[Example 7-78: oboe, mm. 114-119, English horn, mm. 115-116, clarinet, mm. 117-119, horn, m. 119]

Into the searching harmonies sounds an enlivening horn tune in A-flat major, accompanied by mandolin and bassoon:



[Example 7-79: horn, mm. 126-129]

“Sweepingly” (“Schwungvoll”), the violins find their way in:



[Example 7-80: first violins, mm. 134-139]

A buildup to a rapturous ninth chord on E-flat is deflected to a dominant chord on D. Then a regression toward G-flat major and an epilogue of the basses to a harp and viola accompaniment with the rippling motive in the clarinet:



[Example 7-81: cellos and bass clarinet, mm. 170-175]

It is a trailing away into quietly undulating moods, only traversed by aphoristically emerging ideas, a dozing into tender fantasies that are now bright, now dark and glowing. A solo cello and horn start to play a new songful B-flat-major tune “with tone” (“mit Ton”), a broadly streaming cantilena with a lyrical sweep:⁴²

Vcl. Horn
mit Ton
p espr.

Horn
molto f

[Example 7-82: solo cello, mm. 187-194, horn, mm. 187-200]

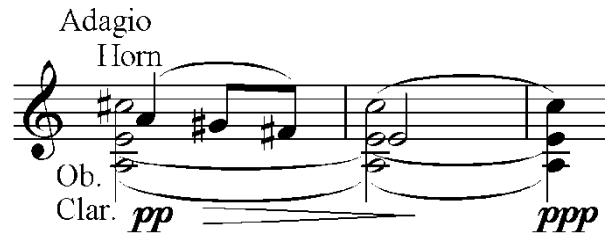
[260] It dominates the following section in the manner of a trio and is initially closed by a violin song in sonorous G-flat major:

Vln.
p molto espr.
ff
sf
p

2 Vln. pizz.
pp

[Example 7-83: first and second violins, mm. 211-218]

For the second time, the trio melody starts, now begun in F major by the cellos, then climbing higher to an emphatic upswing of the full string section under the leadership of the violins and the upper woodwinds. Quietly rustling harp chords conclude it and gently slide from B-flat major over G minor to A major into a meditative “Adagio.” Very gently, the questioning horn call comes:



[Example 7-84: oboe, clarinets, horn, mm. 257-259]

There sounds the sweeping motive of the strings, and the peacefully confined opening mood returns again. Anew the wooing horn melody, which now finds the liberating F-major turn already at the second statement. Guitar and mandolin sound more vividly and tenderly into the song than before. The mood enlivens, presses, and becomes “agitated” (“aufgeregt”). Restlessly surging runs and harmonic evasions of the strings and woodwinds continue until, “Tempo primo subito,” the serenade tune starts again, now assigned to the oboe, circled by the horn:



[Example 7-85: horn (doubled by mandolin) and oboe, mm. 332-335, clarinet, m. 335]

With this motive of love, which sinks deeper and deeper, the song slowly comes to an end. The melody very tenderly fades. Celestial harmonies of threefold divided violins and then violas quietly loose the melodic band. Only the accompanying voices still secretively hum further, as if unconscious, muted horns, guitar, and bass clarinet giving the breathless final chord. In a “dying” (“ersterbend”) low clarinet trill, this night music ends as if it has fallen asleep.⁴³

Night is over, and day rises. With timpani, fanfares, and a ringing play of sound in radiant C major. The dawn has passed, and there is no more penetration out of twilight or presentiment about the adoration of the rising light, as in the first movement. It is a victorious, unequivocal consciousness, a gratifying devotion to the light.⁴⁴ Four timpani, tuned in the intervals of the E-minor triad, begin their festive, rhythmic beats and rolls “with bravura” (“mit Bravour”):



[Example 7-86: timpani, mm. 1-2]

Horns and bassoons take up the motive in B minor, and then switch to G major. Flutes, oboes, and clarinets, with “bells in the air” (“Schalltrichter auf”), follow, and with them strings and bassoons in a forceful striding unison:



[Example 7-87: violins (octave doubling in lower strings and bassoons), mm. 4-6]

Out of this pompously resounding prelude grows the metallic, beaming main theme in the choir of blaring trumpets and horns [261]:



[Example 7-88: trumpets and horns, mm. 6-14, with some doubling from clarinets and others]

With “large vigorous strokes” (“großer markiger Strich”), the violins lead to a C-major conclusion, striding in heaving, double-stop chords, played about by woodwinds with jubilant sixteenth-note figurations:⁴⁵

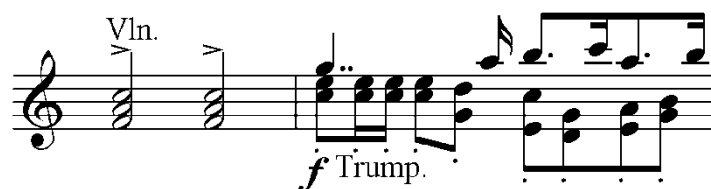
[Example 7-89: strings, horns and trumpet, bassoons, mm. 15-22 with string upbeat in m. 14; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 15-17; piccolo, bass clarinet, mm. 19-22; E-flat clarinet, mm. 20-22; English horn, m. 22]

Rising up with weighty, hammered chords, pressing further in striving rhythms, the epilogue follows immediately:



[Example 7-90: full orchestra (no first violins), mm. 23-24; bass instruments removed, m. 25 (printed F in second chord is a misprint; a lower G is present); violas, lower horns and clarinets removed, m. 26; first and second violins only, mm. 27-28 without last beat of m. 28]

The fanfares of the opening sound out from the brass choir, spanned by an energetic violin line:



[Example 7-91: first violins (with some horn, viola, and oboe doubling), 1st and 2nd trumpets, mm. 37-38 (D omitted from chords of m. 37)]

Jubilant trumpets in three parts belt out alternating, ascending calls:



[Example 7-92: trumpets and trombones, m. 45-46, joined by cellos and woodwinds (flutes, oboes, clarinets) in m. 46]

The figurative, running drive of the theme's second half spreads itself across the entire orchestra. "Bells in the air" ("Schalltrichter auf") in the winds, "stroke by stroke" ("Strich für Strich") in the strings, the sounds of the conclusion are orgiastic.

There is the theme. Despite the diversity of its structure, it streams forth in one course and breathes a fullness of life, a joyfulness of elemental being for which any resistance is not present. Here there is only one will: to allow this force that stands beyond all deep internal movement, and only creates out of the consciousness of its vitality and the splendor of its existence, to discharge itself and to spread out. From such a need the formal construction is formed. As in the first movement, it is already included in the theme. This is only the condensing of the creative will, compressed upon short sound formulas, that achieves articulation in the formation of the whole movement.

Mahler chooses the rondo type. It offered the suitable scheme for the treatment of the basic idea, or more correctly for the will that had generated a basic idea of such shape. The vision of a force that is present and existent, in contrast to the mood of the past in the three night music pieces, [262] and in continuation and completion of the line that was initiated in the first movement—this vision provided the stimulus. The theme was a consequence, the form in turn the outcome of the theme. The rondo therefore arises from similar conditions as in the Fifth Symphony, only the relationship of the preceding movements to the Finale in regard to content is different in the two works. In the Fifth, the necessity of a continuation of the theme was in the sense of expansion and explanation. From this, the fugal presentation emerged. In the Seventh, the theme stands firmly as a complete appearance from the beginning. It only requires the spatial possibilities for unfolding. To construct these for it, the rondo is most appropriate. Not the

rondo that rises to artistic complexity through the fugue. Rather, the rondo in a closer sense to the original definition: as a round song that continuously repeats a principal idea, interrupts it with episodic themes, and thereby emphasizes its significance ever more strongly with each return. Thus does Mahler lay out this Rondo-Finale, completely in the traditional sense. If it moves far beyond the usual in its effect, even if this Rondo outshines the imposing closing movement of the Fifth, the cause lies in the concise force with which the simplest situations are here captured in their original essence and grandly interpreted.

The Rondo of the Seventh is built upon and from eight “rondo refrains.”⁴⁶ Each begins with the theme, as it was presented in the beginning. Furthermore, to each is added an accompanying theme or side idea. These secondary ideas are in turn closely tied to each other. They produce a chain of variations and thus constitute an intensifying series in themselves. Their development is carried out parallel to that of the whole movement and carries a series of attractive images into the massive main structure. The opening theme itself is not essentially altered. The individual deviations are of a more episodic nature, for the urgency lies precisely in the retention and the distinct emphasis of the basic features each time. Only the key relationship is changed. Changing harmonies and in part also deviant instrumentation bring new colors without blurring the individual thematic contour. The development of the movement is built upon consistently varied shading and exposure of the unchanging core, upon the continuous weaving of ever new relationships, from the main theme to the secondary themes that circle them. Upon this, the art of its formation manifests itself.

The first resounding C-major intonation of the complete theme is followed by a sudden change to A-flat major, without a modulating transition, by a simple and abrupt turn. A “long”

(“lang”) hold provides an inner stabilization of the surprising change.⁴⁷ Then there begins, “comfortably” (“behaglich”), an easily strolling, lilting woodwind theme in A-flat:⁴⁸



[Example 7-93: oboes, mm. 53-54, clarinets, m. 55, cellos (partially doubled by violas, then second violins), mm. 56-57]

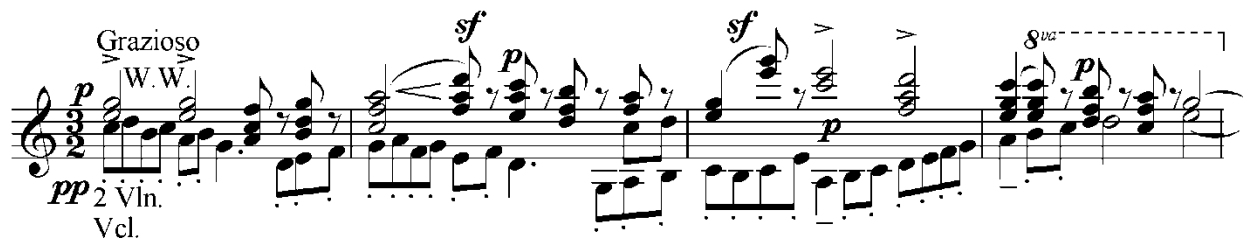
It leisurely spins itself forth in strings and horns, undergoing no development or working out, but is instead passed on from the different registers and voices to one another. After a brief upswing from the violins and flutes, it fades away again. Its significance initially lies in the placement [263] as a mediator between two appearances of the main theme. The second directly follows the “*morendo*” fading of the A-flat-major intermezzo. It begins in trumpets and horns with the second half of the theme that was originally assigned to the strings. The A-major turn in the third measure flows into a brief, brilliantly sweeping cadence. With its closing measure enters, “measured, not fast” (“gemessen, nicht schnell”), the first variation of the epilogue, Allegro moderato ma energico:



[Example 7-94: violins, mm. 87-89]

It is a strange sound: first and second violins in unison without harmonic support, accompanied only by tonic-dominant beats of the timpani. Woodwinds find their way in. They provide the opening motive of the variation, which gradually sinks to an accompanying voice, with a new

countermelody. This “Grazioso” grows in its further course to an independent foil to the main theme and occupies the place of a second subsidiary theme:



[Example 7-95: flutes, clarinets, second violins, cellos, mm. 100-103]

A sudden D-major turn brings the new countersubject to a halt, leads the first variation idea of the strings onward in a rapid intensification, and merges into the third “rondo refrain.” The entire opening group of the theme is heard, again in C major, again in horns and trumpets, but the jaunty sweeping motive in the third measure is entrusted to the softer woodwinds. Strings initially dominate the continuation, and the whole is based upon somewhat dampened coloristic effects. The erstwhile A-flat-major secondary theme is reinterpreted in A minor, and the following brief development of the subsidiary motives gives the section an uninhibited, playful attitude. Only the energetic A-minor close of the unison strings recalls the introduction:



[Example 7-96: strings, mm. 186-188]

It again announces a stronger energetic excitement, which unfolds with the fourth rondo refrain that begins in the abrupt D-flat major of the brass group. The brusque D-flat major was of course a momentary illusion for the sake of emphasizing the shift. The theme, once again only

presented with the second half, leads with a cadence back to C major. Now begins the first strict working-out of the variation motive. Low strings begin *fortissimo*, “with short thrusts” (“kurz gestoßen”), in weighty $3/2$ meter, at first once again only accompanied by timpani beats on C and G:



[Example 7-97: second violins, violas, cellos, timpani, mm. 196-198]

The meter changes, and new contrapuntal voices are added. An A-minor episode works itself in, and the erstwhile A-flat-major secondary theme sounds together with the epilogue of the first theme:



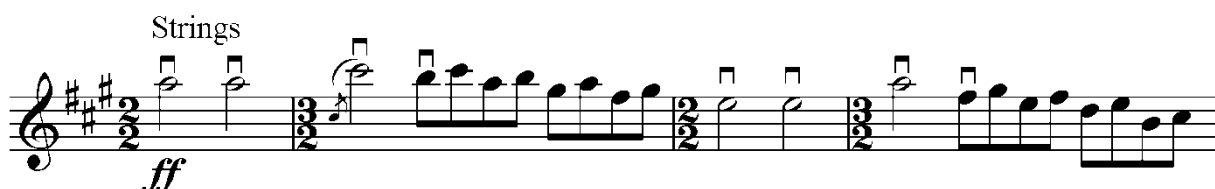
[Example 7-98: flutes, oboes, and clarinets, mm. 210-212]

A minor changes to A major, and the “grazioso” subsidiary theme appears in a solo string quartet:⁴⁹ [264]



[Example 7-99: three solo violins, mm. 220-222]

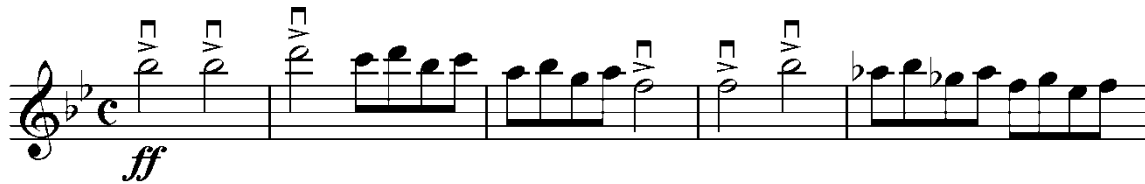
In the soloistic play of voices it asserts itself with delicately measured, tender expression, at first against two roughly interjected measures with a threefold harsh unison C-sharp in the winds. Undisturbed, the *Grazioso* skips along further until a second interposing unison call sets up the massive string theme in new rhythmic displacement:



[Example 7-100: strings, mm. 249-252]

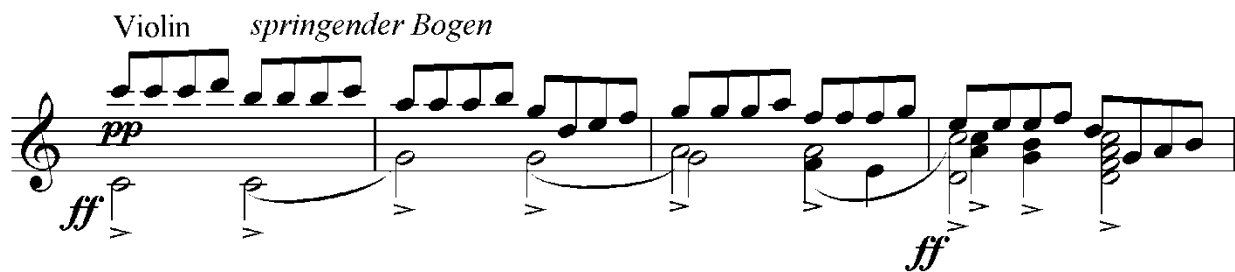
It rushes over quickly changing modulations in continuous acceleration of the tempo toward the opening key of this section: D-flat major. To this point is now attached, the D-flat-major opening going directly to C major as before, the fifth rondo refrain, again with the C-major beginning of the wind theme. This time, however, it does not only provide the introductory upbeat. It combines itself with the variation theme and with the second subsidiary theme, which gives up its *grazioso* character in this forceful brilliance. From C major, the main theme swings to A major, and from here, driving tirelessly, to a cadence in G-flat major. The first subsidiary theme is heard, likewise energetically transformed, in a coarse *fortissimo* of the woodwinds. Then the intensity abates. It again appears “leisurely” (“gemütlich”), languid and lilting as at

first, always driven by urgent motives of the main theme, on to new buildups, for which it appears to be only a dynamic transition. They are discharged in the sixth rondo refrain in B-flat major. It is a majestic, almost solemn statement of the main theme in the full brass choir: trumpets, horns, trombones, tuba, and with them the strong ringing of deep bells and tam-tam. To powerful beats of cymbals and bass drum is added the unison theme of the strings, also in B-flat major:



[Example 7-101: strings, mm. 368-372]

Answering, the woodwinds take it up, and as if in a race, both groups storm onward. Trumpets intone the *grazioso* secondary theme with full force. Once more, pacification. “Meno mosso,” the *Grazioso* continues to sound in the C major of the violins, and the tempo slows to “Graziosissimo, almost a minuet” (“Graziosissimo, beinahe Menuett”). The subsidiary theme skips about in the woodwinds and dissipates into the delicate *pianissimo staccato* of the strings. From the woodwinds, it sounds like a children’s song:⁵⁰



[Example 7-102: second violins, violas, oboes, English horn, clarinets, mm. 439-442]

The full orchestra suddenly starts up in D-flat:



[Example 7-103: all voices (English horn, bass clarinet, bassoons trumpets, tuba, strings), mm. 443-445; open A (violins), m. 446]

Only three measures, then a turn to D major. The seventh rondo refrain begins. Quiet bell sounds. Trombones call out the theme; horns, cellos and, string basses follow, but only suggestively, for a few measures. There sounds from the first horn a new idea, or new within the Finale, that is. It is the Allegro theme of the first movement, accompanied by the variation motive of the Finale and the newly transformed Grazioso: [265]

[Example 7-104: horns, mm. 455-461; first violins, mm. 455-458; second violins, m. 455; trumpets, mm. 457-458; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 459-461]

A strange play begins. The Allegro theme appears with brief interruptions five times in succession, every time changing in key and tone color. It begins in D minor in the horns, sinks to C-sharp minor, from here, becoming more weighty, to C minor in unison strings, and further to B-flat minor in the trombones and tuba, climbs then into the “solemnity” (“Feierlich”) of the full

orchestra to the “radiant” (“strahlend”) D-flat major of the trumpets. Here, once more, a long episodic passage works itself in: the graceful minuet melody of the second subsidiary theme sounds into the powerfully building excitement, soothing and yet internally intense because of the interruption. The final buildup is near, and the tender diversion is only a pause for breath. The minuet fades into the depths, and “*accelerando*” storming woodwinds and strings chase away the idyllic sounds. The triangle rolls piercingly. In thunderous pathos, “somewhat festive, with grandeur” (“etwas feierlich, prachtvoll”), the main theme begins for the last time. Horns and trumpets have the lead, woodwinds provide the hymnal sweep, trombones the majestically resounding echo, and timpani beat the festive heralding roll of the introduction. Low and high bells sound into mighty, expansive chords of the string orchestra. It is a fullness of sound that almost exceeds the capacity to receive it. Inexhaustibly, it storms along, rejoices, presses, and yet cannot find the closing word. Into this revelation of life that has become sound, the Allegro theme of the first movement resounds once more as the last and most exalted proclamation. For the first time within the whole work, it is now in C major, won from earth and from life, become one with all of nature, ascended into the cosmos that encompasses everything and into which everything returns. Sun and earth, creator and creation, the divine and the worldly all sound together in one great chord.⁵¹

It is the summit of life-affirming confession that Mahler has achieved here. It is the maximum capability of instrumental expression that has here come to form. The tragedy of the battle with destiny, the opposition between the world and the individual is overcome through the consciousness of the oneness of the individual with the universe. As the Seventh Symphony has

grown upon the basis of the Fifth and the Sixth, so only does a look back at these two works provide the standard for that which has been achieved here. The path has led from the C-sharp-minor funeral march of the Fifth up to the C-major dithyramb of the Seventh, through the A-minor storms of the Fifth and Sixth. The hammer blows have not shattered, they have steeled. Under their weight, the active strength of the D-major scherzo and Finale of the Fifth has transfigured itself into the E-major Grandioso of the first movement, into the C-major “grandeur” (“Prachtvoll”) of the Finale of the Seventh. The salutation to the “joyous light of the world,” once a yearning that glowed forth from pain, has found its fulfillment. A new cycle has been passed through, and the jubilant fanfares of the close proclaim a new victory. Sound has become a symbol of deep [266] knowledge; form has given the sound life and shape. The sounding breaks out into elemental power, so elemental that it is hardly comprehensible to the physical ear. Beyond this physical appearance of sound, however, acts its metaphysical meaning, acts its symbolism that is heavy with mystery. In it lies the riddle that pulls again and again to Mahler and gives his creations, beyond all conditions of humanity, the consecration of supernatural revelations.⁵²

NOTES

- 1 August Halm, *Die Sinfonie Anton Bruckners* (Munich: G. Müller, 1914), as cited in Bekker's bibliography. A second edition was released in 1923 and reprinted in 1975 by Ohms (Hildesheim). As Bekker states, the formulation of the title is significant. The book does not contain an analysis of each Bruckner symphony, but focuses on the formative process in each movement type. The book, and Halm's approach to the "Bruckner Symphony" are examined in detail in chapter 5 ("Third Culture: Bruckner's Symphony") of Lee Allen Rothfarb, *August Halm: A Critical and Creative Life in Music* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2009), pp. 108-29.
- 2 While primary source material about the Seventh is indeed sparse, anecdotal material would become known. Much of this comes from Alma's published *Erinnerungen* (and is therefore subject to skepticism—see the note about the so-called "Alma problem" in connection with the Tenth Symphony in the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde*, p. 771, note 1). From Alma, we learn that the two "Nachtmusiken" were composed in 1904, perhaps before the Sixth was finished. The other movements followed in 1905. She passes on the anecdote that Mahler's inspiration for the opening rhythm in the introduction to the first movement came from the stroke of oars in a rowboat, and that he said "Here nature roars" to describe the introduction. Alma is the source for the oft-cited connection between the "Nachtmusiken" and Eichendorff's poetry, along with the comparison of the mood in the first one to Rembrandt's painting "The Night Watch." Other than this, she says, the symphony has no program. Statements from Alphons Diepenbrock and Richard Specht confirm that Mahler always associated the first "Nachtmusik" with a sort of nightly procession. Constantin Floros provides a summary of these statements and others (*The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], pp. 189-92).
- 3 In his essay on the structure of the first movement, John Williamson quotes Bekker's words here as particularly perceptive and apt. According to Williamson, the Finale is a hymn to a "triumph over a conflict that was never really there in the first place" ("Mahler and Episodic Structure: The First Movement of the Seventh Symphony" in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler: A Symposium*, edited by James L. Zychowicz [The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Madison, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 1990], pp. 27-28).
- 4 The refined technique and orchestration of the middle movements in particular seems to have affected the enthusiasm shown by both Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern to the Seventh. In a famous letter from Schoenberg to Mahler on December 29, 1909, after the premiere of the Seventh, Schoenberg declared his devotion, speaking of the symphony's transparencies and "subtleties of form." He wondered why he had not related to Mahler's music before. Webern, according to Wolf Rosenberg, was particularly attracted to the orchestral coloring and considered the Seventh his favorite Mahler symphony. See Peter Revers, "The Seventh Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 376 and n. 1. See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 190 and p. 206.
- 5 Revers, citing Bekker, alludes to the "idea of play" that continually arises in critical literature on the Finale ("The Seventh Symphony," pp. 376-77). See also Bekker's comment on the "idea of play" in the "Symphonic Style" chapter, p. 53.
- 6 Compare this passage with Bekker's discussion of the special significance of the Mahlerian theme at the end of the "Symphonic Style" chapter, pp. 79-82.
- 7 Revers shows with several examples how this opening rhythm "inspires and permeates the musical material of the entire exposition" ("The Seventh Symphony," pp. 392-94). Indeed, the rhythm is the primary unifying element in a movement with such abundant contrasts (p. 399). Williamson, citing Frits Noske, asserts that this

dactylic rhythm contributes to the funerary atmosphere of the beginning, and that this rhythm is the “figure of death itself” from Lully to Verdi (alluding to the “Miserere” from *Il Trovatore*). See “Mahler and Episodic Structure,” p. 33. See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 195.

- 8 The low brass harmonies and the drum rolls are only in the second half of the first three measures.
- 9 The concept of “kleiner Septimenakkord” in German is specifically and only applicable to what we would call the “half-diminished seventh” chord, not to the minor seventh or the fully diminished seventh. This is in fact a half-diminished seventh chord.
- 10 See note 2 above.
- 11 Williamson uses the juxtaposition of the funeral dirge and the quick march in the introduction to illustrate changes in genres (or topics) and structures that will become important features in the episodic structure of the movement. The funeral dirge is a “complete” structure, but the quick march is incomplete in itself, relying on the return of the funeral march theme for closure. See “Mahler and Episodic Structure,” p. 32-33.
- 12 Floros states that “the preceding slow introduction can be understood as a lengthy process that leads to the development of this main theme,” and then provides an illustration of that process, including many of the same excerpts used by Bekker (*The Symphonies*, pp. 194-95).
- 13 The idea that the first movement of the Seventh gives the first premonitions of the late style is common, and its “modern” features (such as the many sequences of fourths in this movement) are possible reasons it was admired by Schoenberg and Webern. The relatively simple harmonic style of the Eighth, however, along with this symphony’s own extremely diatonic Finale, mediate between these “modern” features and the emergence of the “late style” in *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth. Theodor Adorno spoke of the harmonies in the Seventh as particular examples of “audacious sonorities” that had meanwhile gained acceptance. He said that these harmonies “clarified the meaning, the melodic seriousness, then the flow of the form.” This applies not only to the first movement, but to passages in the first “Nachtmusik” as well. See Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 110.
- 14 The second theme has harmonic implications for the movement and the symphony as a whole. According to Williamson, who makes reference to the “double-tonic complexes” of Robert Bailey and Christopher Lewis (see the chapter on the Ninth Symphony, p. 824, note 2), although the theme appears in C major, that key is still subordinate to B minor/major in the movement. The “lack of harmonic inner voices” noted by Bekker weakens C major as well, and there is no tonic-dominant motion in the bass drones that support the theme. Although it is long, it does not reach fulfillment and completion, and merges into the quick march. The theme must wait until the climactic appearance—in B major—at the end of the development for its fulfillment. Even though C is subordinate to B (and the movement’s “home” key of E) in this movement, its appearance here is a preparation for its fulfillment as the symphony’s strong closing key in the Finale. See “Mahler and Episodic Structure,” p. 28 and p. 33.
- 15 Recordings of the Seventh Symphony demonstrate the inevitable “high-handed interpretation of the creator’s will.” The shortest, conducted by Hermann Scherchen with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Music and Arts, 1965) runs 68 minutes, while the longest, Otto Klemperer conducting the New Philharmonia Orchestra (EMI, 1969), with a very slow first “Nachtmusik,” along with unusually slow march passages in the first movement, runs 100 minutes. The typical timing is around 80 minutes. Despite Mahler’s precise performance indications,

the dangers of which Bekker outlines here, it is notable that Mahler never indicated precise speed with a metronome marking.

- 16 Chords such as these led Adorno to speak of a “resplendent super-major.” He considered the movement to be a “variant” of the type seen in the first and last movements of the Sixth: “Mahler’s capacity to renew symphonic types from within themselves is not confined to after-echoes. Through a changed illumination the whole movement becomes a variant. It translates the attainments of the preceding orchestral symphonies into the image-world of the early Mahler; in view of the predominant chiaroscuro effects the trite epithet of a Romantic symphony is excusable. Despite the most emphatic construction the movement is sensuously more colorful than anything previously written by Mahler; his late style goes back to it. The major is resplendent with added notes, as a kind of super-major . . . The contrasts, including those of sound, are deepened, as is the perspective” (*Mahler*, pp. 100-1). These comments have had significant impact on interpretations of the movement and, notably, indicate that the movement prefigures the late style (see note 13 above). See also Williamson, “Mahler and Episodic Structure,” p. 30 and Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 194 and 196. Revers makes reference to the subject, contrasting Adorno’s focus on colors and orchestral techniques with Floros’s indication of a wide range of musical forms (“The Seventh Symphony,” p. 394).
- 17 Adorno would also indicate the presence of a two-part division, or “split” of the development section, although he, unlike Bekker, did not perceive a “development of the thematic characters in the sense of the older practice,” but rather a “variant” of the exposition: “. . . the actual developmental parts are extremely succinct . . . the development is split into two elements hostile to sonata form, an exposition variant and an episode field referring back, through the expansion of motives, to the introduction, this field finally issuing in the recapitulation of the introduction; the qualitatively different becomes entirely immanent to the composition” (*Mahler*, p. 101). The “episode field” plays into Williamson’s discussion of the movement’s “episodic structure,” where “one is dealing with a succession of episodes selected for their capacity to contrast rather than to cohere” (“Mahler and Episodic Structure,” pp. 28-29). After placing this episodic structure in a hermeneutic context (including Nietzsche), he turns to Adorno’s statements quoted above. In the development section, Williamson says, the many subdivisions are not difficult to find. He compares analyses of Floros and Henry-Louis de La Grange, noting that they place their divisions of the development section in essentially the same places (pp. 30-31). Floros, however, considers the first passage of the development section as described by Bekker (Adorno’s “exposition variant”) to be a continuation of the exposition’s closing material and therefore a part of it (*The Symphonies*, pp. 192-93).
- 18 Floros begins the development section here. Williamson says that the interpolation of introduction material here provokes a “minor crisis in the evolution of the material” (“Mahler and Episodic Structure,” p. 32).
- 19 Bekker’s single-voice example indicates the entire passage as being played by the trumpet, whereas the first measure is played by the violins in three-part harmony. The second note of m. 230 also lacks a flat sign and appears as an unnecessary tie instead of a slur. The first note of m. 231 should have a natural sign.
- 20 This example has an apparent misprint in the second note of the second measure (m. 254, eighth note on second beat of 2/2) in the 3rd trombone line, which should be G-flat (F-sharp), not the lower E-flat.
- 21 Actually the second trumpet.
- 22 Floros connects this motive to the clarinet figure in the angel scene of the “Urlicht” movement from the Second Symphony. He also mildly chastises Bekker for not recognizing this and for labeling it as an “enticing motive.” Floros calls the following passage, where Bekker begins his “second part” of the development, a “religious

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- vision" (*The Symphonies*, pp. 193, 197-98, 335 n. 17). See also Williamson, "Mahler and Episodic Structure," p. 31.
- 23 The bottom-voice note of the second chord in the example should be G or possibly D, not F. To maintain the voice leading, both G and the low D should have been included. This is an obvious misprint, as there is no F in the chord.
- 24 In any analysis of the movement, this is a significant moment. In his article on the reception history of the Seventh, Hermann Danuser shows that every positive reviewer mentioned this as the most remarkable passage ("Erkenntnis oder Verblendung?" in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Zychowicz, pp. 109-16). He compared the passage to a typical "breakthrough" ("Durchbruch"). Danuser also mentions the preparation for the breakthrough by the preceding chorale-like music, which was largely ignored by reviewers. Revers elaborates on this passage and Danuser's statements ("The Seventh Symphony," pp. 395-99). Floros called it "the core of the whole movement" (*The Symphonies*, p. 198). For Williamson, the passage clinches the role of B in the movement as a "chief contrast to E" ("Mahler and Episodic Structure," p. 36) and finally provides closure for the second subject, which did not reach such a point in its initial C-major appearance (p. 33). The appearance of the theme in the recapitulation in G major confirms the importance of that key as a secondary area, as it was prominent in the development section during the "soloistic" chamber music-like passage.
- 25 According to Williamson, the reprise of the introduction is not the most remarkable thing about this recapitulation, and should indeed have been expected (the device is also used in the First, Third, and Sixth symphonies). More striking is the twofold return of the main Allegro theme, as noted here. The "Grandioso" is not merely a culmination, but has the effect of the true, actual return. See "Mahler and Episodic Structure," p. 32.
- 26 The "key of fulfillment" is the "key of otherworldly transfiguration" in other contexts at key points of the Second, Fourth, Sixth, and Eighth Symphonies.
- 27 Along with other diverse thematic sources, "Revelge" and its companion piece "Der Tambour'sell" are cited by Peter Davison as thematic sources for the movement. He also finds interesting resemblances to certain passages in Bizet's *Carmen*, such as the first scene of Act III, the Habanera, and the "fate" motive. There are fascinating parallels between the plot of *Carmen* and those of the two last *Wunderhorn* songs, such as the conflict between duty and passion. Like *Carmen*, "Der Tambour'sell" tells of a soldier who has deserted. See "Nachtmusik I: Sound and Symbol" in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Zychowicz, pp. 68-73.
- 28 This introduction has generated much comment and interpretation. Revers brings up a parallel to Berlioz in the "Scène aux champs" from the *Symphonie fantastique* in the call-and-response opening, but remarks that the "call" and "answer" here build up into a turmoil and then a breakdown, stating that "the music is no longer able to resist its own inner dynamic." Revers specifically notes the change from major to minor—the familiar "motto" from the Sixth Symphony—that happens simultaneously with the plunging chromatic scale ("The Seventh Symphony," p. 385). This is also noted by Floros (*The Symphonies*, pp. 198-99). Davison points out striking parallels between elements of this introduction and a passage in Eichendorff's novella *Ahnung und Gegenwart*, which speak to the Eichendorff connection mentioned by Alma ("Sound and Symbol," p. 69).
- 29 Floros also comments on the major-minor alternation (*The Symphonies*, p. 199). He cites Adorno on the subject of ambivalence in mode: "Tonality, permanently sharpened in the play of major and minor, becomes a medium of modernism" (*Mahler*, p. 26).

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- 30 Davison speaks of the symbolism of the cow bells (“Sound and Symbol,” p. 70). It was at a rehearsal of the Seventh Symphony where Mahler indicated this symbolism, already discussed in the chapter on the Sixth Symphony. See p. 536, note 5.
- 31 A detail not noted by Bekker here is the return of the cowbells, now no longer in the distance, but in the orchestra. Davison says that this is an “ironic disappointment.” “What previously had tantalizing allure, a means of passage to a heightened consciousness, has revealed itself as a herd of cattle” (“Sound and Symbol,” p. 72).
- 32 Revers discusses the ending at length, stating that the major-minor contrast is combined with the change from rising to falling progressions and an “extreme contrast of orchestral timbres” at the end. “The refining of contrasts and ambivalence of timbre becomes a significant compositional principle” (“The Seventh Symphony,” p. 385).
- 33 Revers asserts that “a continuous thematic outline is more or less suspended,” even after m. 13. He says that a main idea of these first bars is “the genesis of musical context itself.” The “emergence and dissociation of motivic or thematic structures” can also be seen in the Scherzo of the Second Symphony” (“The Seventh Symphony,” p. 389). Talia Pecker Berio, in her analysis of the movement, draws attention to the “continuous shifting of accents” that weakens the regularity of the triple meter. She also comments on the gradual emergence of the triplet motion from the elements of the opening. (“Perspectives of a Scherzo,” in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Zychowicz, p. 76). Later on, Berio will describe the process in a different way: “Melody, for Mahler, is no longer a given closed entity, but a fluctuating accumulation of musical figures” (p. 78).
- 34 The reduction of the penultimate measure in this example to the loud, prominent clarinet note shows Bekker’s obvious interest in highlighting it. Berio, however, concentrates on several other elements in this particular measure that never appear again, including an important *pizzicato* arpeggio in the string basses. She calls the “explosion” in this measure “one of the most extraordinary moments in this symphony” (“Perspectives of a Scherzo,” p. 77).
- 35 Floros states that “probably no other movement by Mahler has so many tumbling passages” (*The Symphonies*, p. 202). Revers connects this quality with Adorno’s concept of “Zusammenbruch,” or “breakdown” because of the movement’s “frequent collapse” (“The Seventh Symphony,” p. 389).
- 36 Bekker does not mention the distinctive marking “kreischend” (“shrieking”) in the woodwind run at this point, although he will mention it in the context of the reprise. Berio and Floros both discuss the use of the “kreischend” figures as agents of motivic development, particularly their sudden insertion at strategic moments of the Trio to mark structural points therein, such as the example marked 7-63. See “Perspectives of a Scherzo,” p. 207 and *The Symphonies*, pp. 202-3.
- 37 Of the entire movement, and particularly the relationship between Scherzo and Trio epitomized in this rather brutal passage, Adorno says: “The Scherzo of the Seventh is again a development-scherzo like that of the Fifth, yet reduced by the need to represent a third character piece between the two *Nachtmusik*. The trio, only lightly sketched and interrupted, speaking with a voice almost more touching than anything else in Mahler, literally becomes the victim of symphonic development, brutally distorted as was once Berlioz’s *idée fixe* of the beloved in the desolate Finale, only to recover its beauty in a consequent phrase of dignified composure” (*Mahler*, p. 104).

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- 38 According to Peter Davison, the inclusion of both the guitar and the mandolin contributes to the objective, universal view of intimacy and love in the movement, making it a “serenade about all serenades.” The elements of nature, such as the bird calls heard throughout the piece in the wind instruments, provide an “eternal context” for the human drama. See “Nachtmusik II: ‘Nothing but Love, Love, Love?’” in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Zychowicz, p. 93.
- 39 Op. 85, No. 12. This piece has always been popular for transcriptions and arrangements including string instruments. There are several versions for cello and piano.
- 40 Given the many musical examples Bekker includes for this movement, it is curious that he passes by the measures immediately preceding this point. Davison and Revers both interpret the passage marked “melancholisch” from mm. 89-92 in structural and hermeneutic ways. Revers sees the phrase as a consequent that evaporates in a *veloce* ending, disrupting the periodic structure. He also interprets the direction “melancholisch” as “the melancholy reality of life which intrudes on the dreamlike atmosphere of folklore that characterizes untroubled idyll,” making reference to Eichendorff (“The Seventh Symphony,” pp. 385, 388-89). Davison takes this even further, indicating a connection to the same work of Eichendorff he cited in the context of the first “Nachtmusik”: *Ahnung und Gegenwart*. In the story, the character of Leontin observes a pair of lovers and cries out “O holy melancholy!” Davison connects this to his interpretation of the movement as an “objective,” outside view of idealized love, a step toward the vision of Platonic Love in the Eighth Symphony (“‘Nothing but Love, Love, Love?’” pp. 93-95).
- 41 There is some ambiguity in the form of the movement, and this moment begins the most ambiguous structural division. Davison discusses this formal ambiguity, stating that the movement can be interpreted in either a ternary or a sonata form. In a ternary design, however, the middle section, or “trio,” would more obviously be placed later on, at m. 187. This moment, at m. 99, is clearly the end of the first, or “A” section. The passage that follows has aspects of a development section, but the section from m. 187 (the “trio”) does not function in that way, and the return to the “A” section is not approached with a strong, inevitable dominant preparation, as would be the case in a sonata form. Davison makes an interesting comparison with the form of another “serenade” piece, Wagner’s “Siegfried Idyll,” which has similar formal ambiguity. See “‘Nothing but Love, Love, Love?’” pp. 90-92. Floros arrives at the most convincing solution, simply describing the form as a combination of sonata and ternary form—or a ternary form with a development section preceding the “trio” (*The Symphonies*, p. 204).
- 42 Most analyses place the “B” section or “trio” here.
- 43 Davison makes the point that the ending of the second “Nachtmusik” is the “point of maximum repose” in the symphony. This is then juxtaposed with the thunderous opening of the Finale for maximum contrast. This gives rise to the possible model of Strauss’s *Sinfonia Domestica*, in which a bright day also follows a love scene. But Strauss’s “exhibitionism” regarding intimacy replaces Mahler’s “voyeurism and self-modesty.” See “‘Nothing but Love, Love, Love?’” pp. 95-96.
- 44 Since Adorno’s famous negative assessment of this Finale, the controversy surrounding the movement has not abated. Through the lens of this criticism, Bekker’s positive view of the movement, along with the approval of other early critics, stands in stark contrast. Adorno’s polemic takes the stable, diatonic harmony as a starting point, and then goes on to say that the movement’s contrasts are more theatrical than sincere. He says that there is an “impotent disproportion between the splendid exterior and the meager content of the whole.” Another remarkable statement is that “the limpid soaring of the solo violin in the first measure of the fourth movement of Mahler’s Seventh, solace that follows like a rhyme the mourning of the tenebrous Scherzo, commands more

belief than all the pomp of the Finale.” The most familiar statement then clinches the argument: “Mahler was a poor yea-sayer [or yes-man]. His voice cracks, like Nietzsche’s, when he proclaims values, speaks from mere conviction, when he himself puts into practice the abhorrent notion of overcoming on which the thematic analyses capitalize, and makes music as if joy were already in the world. His vainly jubilant movements unmask jubilation, his subjective incapacity for the happy end denounces itself” (*Mahler*, p. 137). Adorno’s view would be echoed in the equally notorious assessment of Deryck Cooke, who stated that “the Finale is largely a failure” and that “Mahler had written for once the thing he most detested—*Kapellmeistermusik*” (Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to His Music* [London: Cambridge University Press, 1980], pp. 90-91). In his largely apologetic article that is not without some criticism, James L. Zychowicz elaborates on the pejorative term *Kapellmeistermusik*. It is music of a pedantic emptiness—music that one would find from a competent but not gifted composer, or the well-written but not profound works of a gifted one. Zychowicz elaborates on the role of musical quotation in *Kapellmeistermusik* and whether the apparent quotations from Wagner and Léhar (see notes 45 and 48 below) are intentional, and if so, what that intent was (“Ein schlechter Jasager: Considerations on the Finale to Mahler’s Seventh Symphony,” in *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Zychowicz, pp. 98-106 at 102-3). In the course of the article, Zychowicz tries to rescue the movement from critics such as Adorno and Cooke: “The problem of the Finale being convincing may be a failure in the comprehension of the audience and not the composer” (p. 104). He places a focus on the movement’s complexities, how it blurs forms, processes, and distinctions by integrating variation into the Rondo: “It is not simply a matter of achieving thematic unity in this movement, but, more deeply, a consolidation of approach such that the opening section does not function as only a static refrain for the rondo but as the statement of a theme which would be varied throughout” (pp. 100-1). Finally, Zychowicz concedes that these complexities also create inevitable difficulties in appreciating the movement: “The layers of meaning, both musical and programmatic, overlap such that it becomes difficult to follow the work on any one level consistently throughout” (p. 105). This reflects a statement at the beginning of the article that echoes Bekker’s “devotion to the light”: “The image of light itself emerges in the Finale, not as a sudden beacon or a blinding flash, but as something less clear. It seems that Mahler’s light is achieved only after much struggle, and even then, it is not completely free” (p. 98). Bekker’s view of the movement has been frequently cited by later authors, including Zychowicz, Revers, and Floros. For the most part, these citations are sympathetic to Bekker’s view, although there are exceptions. See note 52 below.

- 45 This is often cited as a quotation or paraphrase of the opening gesture from Wagner’s Prelude to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, or at least a motivic allusion. See, e.g., Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 209, Revers, “The Seventh Symphony,” p. 376, and Zychowicz, “Ein schlechter Jasager,” p. 103.
- 46 A direct translation of Bekker’s term here, “round songs,” does not really work in English. I have chosen terminology more typical of the analysis of rondo forms.
- 47 Revers uses this moment to illustrate his view of the movement: that the superficial splendor is part of Mahler’s intent, and that such harsh juxtapositions of key and character, along with choices of instrumentation such as wooden mallets on the timpani, are part of a “multiplicity of sounds which occupies a spectrum from the sublimely romantic to the grotesquely deformed.” Fractured moments in the Scherzo have a similar function. Revers concludes that Mahler’s intention is almost a parody of the traditional finale, as if he were saying that its time is over and not, as Bernd Sponheuer opined, a “failed attempt at a restoration of a past aesthetic convention” (“The Seventh Symphony,” pp. 377-84, quoted at 377).
- 48 The resemblance between this theme and Franz Léhar’s *Merry Widow* waltz (from the operetta *Die lustige Witwe*) is frequently noted. See Zychowicz, “Ein schlechter Jasager,” p. 103.

49 Mahler actually indicates five solo string instruments in this passage, not four, including three violins. Bekker's error is odd considering that the three violin lines are the ones he gives in his example.

50 Bekker appears to be referring to the resemblance in the oboe line to the tune known in English as "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

51 Bekker's analysis of the movement, making note of every rondo refrain, is so thorough and perceptive that criticisms of his positive assessment ring hollow. Another sympathetic analyst, Floros, concludes his discussion of the Finale with the hypothesis that Mahler understood the movement as a "parable for the eternal return." He relates this to the basic concept in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, the "thought of eternal return, the highest form of affirmation ever to be achieved." The eightfold statement of the rondo theme, each time varied in some way, symbolizes this eternal return. This could be construed as a triumphant rebuttal to Adorno, who invoked Nietzsche in a negative sense when criticizing the movement. See *The Symphonies*, p. 211.

52 Several of Bekker's statements here have been quoted by later authors. Revers, for example, refers to the first three sentences as a contrast to the negative judgment of Adorno ("The Seventh Symphony," p. 376). The description of the movement as a "C-major dithyramb" is a particular favorite of these commentators (see, e.g., Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 207). Zychowicz sheds light on the nature of the "dithyramb": "Not shapeless, a dithyramb is traditionally a work which the composer may take any form he finds appropriate for his purposes. In the classical world, it was associated with the god Dionysius, whose adherents worshipped by giving full vent to their emotions. As such, it may be that this movement would commemorate Mahler's brothers in Dionysius, just as a later one [the Rondo-Burlesque of the Ninth] would be dedicated to his brothers in Apollo. In composing such a movement, Mahler is 'kein schlechter Jasager,' not any sort of yes-man, but rather an individual voice expressing himself in the best, most original way he could" ("Ein schlechter Jasager," p. 105).

[267]

THE EIGHTH SYMPHONY

[268 blank]

[269] On September 12, 1910 in Munich, under Mahler's direction, the premiere performance of the Eighth Symphony took place. The impact of the previous works had not been uniform. Only the Second Symphony had found approval. The others had been received somewhat coolly, and the three instrumental symphonies almost consistently with objection or even head shaking. The premiere of the Eighth signified the first unquestionable, far-reaching success. It was enthusiastically embraced by the public, but although there was not unanimous acclaim from the critics, at least a portion of them recognized that one would no longer be able to contemptuously overlook a creative output that had led to such a pinnacle or dismiss it with the sympathetic wording of a great intention but an inadequate achievement.¹ It was the success for which Mahler had longed and fought. The Eighth was supposed to open up the view for the complete works. It was supposed to open the hearts that had thus far been hardened. Perhaps the hardening of minds had been necessary to awaken in him as a reaction, after overcoming all struggles, from the force of ecstatic attraction that emanates from the warm breath of this work, such an extensive desire for love. As if under a higher command, Mahler opens all the sources of his being, plunging himself into a creative frenzy that has something feverish and consuming. This self-immolation in the act of artistic production is tragic. Out of the ruthless destruction of his reserves speaks the premonition of the oncoming collapse. But Mahler's will had triumphed. The goal was achieved; the victory had also become external. In the meantime, he turned fifty years old. Eight months later he was buried.

It would not be correct to blindly reproach his contemporaries because of their unfavorable or even derogatory² opinion regarding the preceding seven symphonies. Mahler's work and personality was something new. New in view of external aspects of the structure,

diction, and style of his music. New above all in relation to the sense and symbolism of his output. The more one recognizes that the key to Mahler's art lies precisely here, the less one can make judgments about his contemporaries, with the exception of the malicious or malevolent ones. What had struggled forth from within him out of doubt and pain, what was hardly even comprehensible to him, who always felt himself as only a vessel of the Divine, could only be recognized by those who stood at a distance when a larger viewpoint for the complete works was provided. Mahler felt this. But he could not create the clarifying work until he had provided the foundation and had completed the passage through the seven transformations of his self. With the Eighth Symphony, he sensed that he had now attained that ground. Here, the soul needed to resonate with its humanity. This recognition of the pure, divine revelation within him caused him to await his destiny from the Eighth. Next to this, the consciousness of its own outward effect was not taken into consideration. His desire was not success, but to be understood. Here, he had found the formula, and it could no longer be misunderstood.

Only from this summit can an overview be obtained. With Mahler, it is necessary for the comprehension of the individual. Mahler's complete oeuvre is a growth of the one out of the other, a constant labor on a fundamental [270] idea of a kind that seldom reveals itself in such unity and fantastically executed continuity. With most musicians, a diversity of cultivated genres hinders the clarity of the overall view. The interests run off in too many different directions for the hidden unity among them to be readily recognizable. It is most likely to be comprehended with Richard Wagner, where a similar restriction to only one area is apparent. But Wagner's form was inherently richer and, viewed from the outside, more comprehensive than Mahler's. How is it to be explained that Mahler, except for a few songs,³ found satisfaction in this single

formal genre? Stimulation to create in other areas could not have been lacking for him within the musical sphere in which he moved. It is more likely that it demanded effort for him to resist such stimuli. For his acceptance as a composer, works of a smaller format and an easier execution would have been very helpful, and as little as one can imagine a string quartet or a piano sonata by Mahler, it would be reckless to claim that his talent would not have been sufficient for works of this kind.

Here, a secret of individual predisposition lies hidden. It is doubtlessly connected to the nature of the talent, although certainly in another sense than that of an assessment of value. Mahler's musical feelings were of a cosmic nature. They could only become fruitful through the idea of the sounding universe. Problems of chamber or solo music did not echo within him and made nothing fluently creative in him. Only the cosmic world of the orchestra, in which the individual, even when freely made prominent, always remains an impersonal member of the general community, awakened in him conceptions of an intrinsically creative kind that caused the deepest parts of his nature to resonate. One can find in this, when one wishes, a limitation of his gifts. In truth, such an assessment only proves that Mahler had a confessional nature of unusual purity. Everything artful⁴ remained strange and odious to him. Even his proclivity for the symphony was not rooted in the artistic attraction that the diversity and wealth of the orchestral language held for him. This artistic attraction was only a consequence of Mahler's ethical predisposition. It made him into an apostle of universal human love. In one of the Mildenburg letters referred to earlier, there is a passage that is deeply characteristic of Mahler's nature. After the description of a visit to a bell factory in a Berlin suburb, he tells of his return to the city: "But now back to the general management: the lobbying was in full force. These faces! These bony

people! Every inch of their faces carried the traces of the self-tormenting egoism that makes all men so unhappy! Always I and I—and never Thou, Thou my brother!”⁵

This “my brother” unveils Mahler’s soul. His feeling for the world recognized the creation of God in every creature and included all within the same ardent love of this divine kinship. Such a perception of the world needed to resist forms of creation that, like opera, were directed to an audience divided by class or, like chamber and solo music, to an intellectual elite. For him as the creator, for whom creating was an ethical as well as an artistic necessity, only an audience without differences of an intellectual or social kind could be considered. His congregation needed to include all [271] that had ears to hear.⁶ To it he offered his form of art, whose acceptance was bound to no requirements of education, possession of intellect, nor any other possessions. Neither opera, even in the apparently democratizing evenness of Wagnerian reform, to say nothing of aristocratic solo and chamber music, could provide enough for this socialistic artistic attitude. Even the symphonic form as Mahler found it was not what was sought. It did, however, allow for an expansion corresponding to the internal laws of his nature. Mahler’s religious and ethical attitude was directed toward the fellowship of humanity. He built the temple of his art to this fellowship. He built it such that his works could find no room in the concert halls of his time and burst beyond them. From the inside, this was through the thunderous power of a cosmic life within them that jumped the sonic boundaries of the concert halls. From the outside in, this was through the congregation to which he spoke. It included all who were weary and heavy laden, primarily the poor in spirit, and then the immense multitude of those to whom art had been foreign, those without understanding.⁷ All who had been able to find no relationship to the artistic establishment of their time, who knew nothing of it and wished to

know nothing of it. To them he revealed a new art beyond the social and intellectual boundaries, an art that again touched upon the elemental impulses of feeling.⁸

The world view that Mahler carried within himself and his all-encompassing, messianic love of humanity necessitated each other. From their union, the necessity of symphonic creation emerged for him, along with the directive for the extension of his symphonic forms. It had determined the development of his previous works. It gave him the impetus for the continuation and culmination of the formal as well as the ideal conception in the Eighth.

Mahler's symphonies up to the Seventh, apart from the First, which is better assessed as a prelude, divide themselves into two large groups: the *Wunderhorn* symphonies and the instrumental symphonies. Considered by the content, the first group signifies a confrontation with problems of an unearthly kind, with the relationship to the Divine and the transcendent. The second group takes up problems of inner personal life, placing the individual with his creations, struggles, and accomplishments in opposition to the world and the powers that control it.⁹ With the conclusion of the Seventh Symphony, the harmony of the individual with the world had been won, similarly as with the Finale of the Third and, growing out of it, the epilogue-like Fourth, the harmony with the Divine. Two different cycles had been traversed. They come in contact at one point. Mahler had titled the Finale of the Third "What Love Tells Me." For him, this love was God. He could have also titled the Finale of the Seventh "What Love Tells Me." Certainly not divine love, and also not the love of man for woman. Love of life, love of the earth, the joy of human existence, as opposed to the otherworldly peace in the Finale of the Third, and as opposed to the fairy tale dream of "heavenly life" in the Finale of the Fourth. This one thing remains common to both fundamentally, inherently different worlds, and each time it is the

elemental driving force in the creation and the outcome of the great symphonic journey: love, which penetrates the world and the heavens. This all-encompassing love now becomes, after the thorough investigation of heaven and earth, [272] the basis of a new work. Even the idea alone draws a common denominator for the Mahlerian oeuvre. A cosmic feeling of sound, a socialistic will to form, and an artistic ethos flow into one. This one raises itself, with eruptive force of ecstasy, out of subjective limitations to the height of a human affirmation.

Only this artist was able to take on such a task, and he only after the struggle through a whole life's work. For the solution, however, he required other means than he had previously used. Here, the orchestra alone could no longer suffice. As a sound symbol of life in nature, as a vehicle for the expression of high-concept emotional experiences, as the mediator of that unspeakable compulsion that works behind the outer appearance of things, the orchestra had been developed by Mahler to the most extreme flexibility of verbal capacity. But now it was necessary to pronounce a clear and conscious confession. Here, the word and the human voice needed to be added. Not, with the exception of the Finale of the Second, the solo voice as before. No longer did the individual person speak, but all humanity spoke and confessed. All that have breath needed to be drawn in, a choir of all types, solos of all vocal characters, in order to make such an expression of human feeling plausible and to give it convincing strength.

Because of this prevalent use of the choir and vocal soloists, the accusation of a misleading designation of the work has been raised against Mahler. Hermann Kretzschmar, whose *Führer durch den Konzertsaal* (*Guide Through the Concert Hall*), while rich in positive information, fails with respect to Mahler because of an inadequate basic attitude, calls it “a senseless reversal of centuries-old concepts when one unhesitatingly¹⁰ issues a work as a

symphony in which the orchestra's independent portion is limited to a series of modest epilogues and a single longer prelude.”¹¹ The debate over whether the work is to be addressed as a symphony or as a cantata could be regarded as a futile dispute over words. However, it is about something other than differences of opinion because of a title. What matters is the recognition that this symphony as a form, even in consideration of the resources used, is for Mahler the fulfillment of that which he envisioned as the original nature of the symphonic work of art. Decisive for him was not the kind of representational media, not the sequence and construction of individual movements. What was decisive was the expansion of the symphonic form to the representation of a cosmic experience. An all-pervading feeling of nature, reflected in a form that is bound to the ideal condition of a human fellowship, this was his conception of the nature of the symphony. If, in external details, it contradicted the traditional concepts, then, by virtue of his creativity, he has set a current concept against the historical one. Accordingly, one misjudges not only the character of the Eighth Symphony when one denies it the right to the name of the genre; one also misunderstands the primary focus of Mahler's output in general. As conspicuously as the Eighth outwardly stands out from the preceding works, in truth it is as much a necessary consequence, actually a fulfillment of the earlier symphonies, the most unified declaration of the Mahlerian will, the pure incarnation of his spirit and his ethic.

[273] How much Mahler thought about the work in a symphonic way from the outset, and how distant for him the idea was of turning it to another genre, is proved by the earliest preserved sketch. It shows a plan that is conspicuously divergent from the later design. Four movements are specified. They carry the designations: “1) Hymne Veni Creator, 2) Scherzo, 3) Adagio Caritas, 4) Hymne: die Geburt des Eros (The Birth of Eros).” As far as music sketches,

the page only contains the opening theme of the first movement.¹² Mahler thus initially thought of a four-part work in which, beside a regular scherzo, the idea from the Fourth Symphony of a “Caritas” Adagio appeared.¹³ The outer movements were planned as choral pieces, the first as an invocation of the divine creator spirit, the last as a celebration of the earthly illuminator, of Eros.¹⁴ Later, Mahler strayed from this plan, moving to a two-part layout. Of course, this two-part design should not actually be viewed as being in two movements. The present second part falls into an Adagio, Scherzo, and Finale. The symphonic construction is therefore preserved, despite the initially unusual external arrangement, and the first movement also displays the sonata-like structure corresponding to the symphonic type. Here is shown a continuation of the division into parts that was used in the Third, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies with the innovation that the three movements of the second part are not separated as otherwise, but instead are organically connected to one another.¹⁵

Definitive for this kind of layout were the texts used. For the opening movement, Mahler had found the text right away. It was the old Latin hymn “Veni creator spiritus,” for Mahler the invocation of the primeval creative force: love as the basic causative and formative power of all existence. The use of this text was fixed for him from the beginning. From it, the clear understanding of the basic idea presumably emerged. Its opening theme is the first sketch for the work. Adding a complement to this text was the problem upon whose solution the success of the whole depended. Mahler must have brooded for a long time over this complement before he arrived at the plan, as bold as it was outlandish, to use the closing of Goethe’s *Faust*. Outlandish inasmuch as it must have seemed astonishing and irreverent to couple this fragment from one of the most powerful poetic works of all time with another poetic work. All the more outlandish as

the *Faust* composition held within itself enough to suggest an independent musical creation. For eighty years, it had been one of the most used subjects for compositional treatment, upon which, in addition to many minor and mediocre figures, some of the strongest musical minds had made efforts. Mahler did not adopt the poem as a *Faust* problem, and did not adopt it from the literary side. He comprehended it purely out of his musical requirement. Therein lies the difference between him and his predecessors, and at the same time his justification. He did not view it with respect to its position within the *Faust* idea of Goethe, but instead with respect to its emotional content and to the inner process of the complete poetic conception that carried it. For him, the Faustian therein stepped into the background. If he thus avoided from the beginning a comparison to other musical *Faust* settings, then by this very fact, he was successful in musically and emotionally comprehending the poem in its fullness of innermost life. What drew him to Goethe's words and scenes was alone the idea of the appearance of love as a purifying, liberating, clarifying power. According to this idea, he selected for composition [274] the scenes from the songs of the Anchorites on through the Chorus mysticus. Thus, although he did not provide a Goethe composition in the philological sense, perhaps he did provide the pure reflection of the emotional process within this self-contained closing section. He thus simultaneously obtained a contrast and an organic complement to the first part of the symphony. There, love as the awakener and the divine revelation; here, love as an active force, as the mediator of a gradual elevation and refinement to a transfigured state.

That was the intellectually poetic and formally structural precondition from which Mahler here created: a cosmic conception of the nature of the symphonic genre, revealed through the elemental creative force of love. Such a conception was designed in a phase of the highest

artistic and human maturity, after confrontation with all the component problems, after the erection of a gigantic seven-part symphonic work of which each individual member, although independent, is yet, in view of that which follows, always a preparation, and the whole appears as an overpowering effort from the whole personality toward a final avowal.

The musical execution went parallel to the intellectual and formal conception. It was necessary to find a style that corresponded to the overall meaning of the work. Mahler is supposed to have described the symphony as a gift to the nation, a testimony as to how far he aspired here in his desire to make an impact.¹⁶ In reality, the capacity of the work reaches beyond a single nation. As in Beethoven's Ninth, eternal possessions of humanity are glorified here whose recognition is not bound to the sensitivities of national borders.¹⁷ The tonal language needed to correspond to such a radius of impact. In coherence and sweeping power, it needed to exceed both the appealing, yet subjectively rooted folk character of the *Wunderhorn* style as well as the abstract symbolism of the later instrumental style. It needed to act as an elemental revelation, to carry the rapturous power of ecstasy within itself, to be clear and graphic enough to inwardly enliven and inspire the masses, and, through the bold pattern of the lines, along with the concentrated force of grand dynamic developmental curves, to compel a unification of the community of listeners that had been previously undreamed of. The technical compositional problem lay in utilizing the summoned mass apparatus—double four-voice choir to which a boys' choir is added, eight solo voices and large orchestra—in such a way that the art of the construction did not hinder the flow and transparency of the stream of sound. It was vital to discover a kind of polyphony whereby the use of all means of complicated compositional technique always allowed the individual lines to strikingly come forward.¹⁸

Mahler not only overcame these difficulties that were produced by the nature of the task, but they raised his language to a surety and convincing power of expression that had nowhere been previously achieved. It is as if inner inhibitions that still existed before were suddenly fallen and the musical purity of his nature streamed out unrestrained. The individual themes sound from an improvisatory effortlessness of invention. They breathe a satisfied beauty, a warm fullness of sonic eloquence, and are so accessible and memorable that a feeling of the appearance of something long familiar and yet for the first time perceptible to the senses [275] becomes alive in the listener. These themes rest upon fundamental human melodies that are latent in everyone and only require a strong creative aura to sound out. One cannot call them original in the usual sense. They contain nothing subjective. Everything that is personally conditioned appears to be removed from them, and there remain only the basic sounds of communal feeling. If such melodies are invented on a small scale, folk tunes arise that everybody immediately knows and nobody knows from whence they actually come. In art music, it is given to few to create melodies of such a kind. And these few also only in moments in which they are able to rise above the limits of their individuality by virtue of a special intuition. In such moments, the artist touches on the primary source of music. Art music again obtains an influx of the popular, which gives it new strength and reason for being.¹⁹

The themes of the Eighth stream throughout from this source. Thus, they fascinate less through artistic construction and subtle curves of design than through the richness and strength of their natural sounds. They line up in great quantity and diversity, but upon closer reflection they prove to be inwardly related. One grows from the other, and the relationship reveals itself in many details. Beyond these connections that were partially unknown to the creator, Mahler has

set up extensive thematic dovetailing. Individual basic themes pervade the whole work, uncovering inner connections. Periodically closed sections are common to both parts of the symphony along with changes to the text. By this, simplification and clarity are obtained. The parts divide themselves and grow under an internally operative law. Before the listener, the emergence of a form takes place whose necessity and strength he perceives without being able to conceptually understand it. The formal organism lives in a mysterious way, drawing the listener into the spell of its creation, thereby awakening in him the profound excitement of the shared experience of an ecstatic creative process.

This transparency of the organism is also shown in the way in which Mahler makes the means of polyphonic style serviceable for homophonic purposes. From the Fifth Symphony on, Mahler continuously used contrapuntal techniques and forms and thereby obtained flexibility and freedom of voice leading that gave him dominion over the multiplicity of his instruments. But polyphony in the old sense was never his goal. For him, it was not about the interweaving, but the setting apart of the voices. If he writes a fugue, a canon, or a combination of several voices, it is always the effect of temporal succession, never that of spatial superimposition. This is a peculiarity of Mahlerian counterpoint whose ultimate causes can hardly be proved with logically tangible reasons. Thus, the technical, sometimes very intricate linear style of the Eighth never awakens in the listener an awareness of artfulness. The strict intellectual tautness of the old polyphony is lacking. Mahler's polyphony has the side effect of a simplifying unraveling of a harmonically dense linear technique.²⁰

Beside the trans-personal nature of the melodic invention, beside the inner unity of the themes and the characteristic return of thematic [276] groups, beside the palpable shared

experience of the birth of the form, beside the homophonic clarity of the polyphonic technique, there is a strength and vividness of declamation that secures the work an irresistible urgency of effect. Mahler's declamation is not developed according to modern perception of the meaning and meter of the language. One can rather say that Mahler's treatment of words, here in a larger text as in the smaller *Wunderhorn* texts, is often directed, in a logical sense, against the inflection of the language. This very kind of textual treatment, however, makes the listener conscious of the emotional strength of the language, of the poetic mystery of its meaning. It lends the text a musical objectivity.²¹ A precondition of this effect is Mahler's gift to sing the text internally, to form its declamation from this strength of vocal sensitivity. This observation touches on perhaps the last reason for the overwhelmingly impressive force of the work. The elemental musical statement, song, again becomes the strongest expression of musical life. Everything sings. Not only the choir and soloists, against whom the orchestra clings and nestles. It sings out of the creating musician, it sings in to the listener, who relives the work from the imagination of internally singing along. It is as if not only, as Mahler writes in a letter, the whole universe were to begin sounding, but as if it were to begin singing.²² It is an apotheosis of song. The voice, the immediate, living bearer of feelings, becomes the mediator from one person to another. From it comes the suggestion of the union of everything, before which the boundaries of individuality melt away in the fire of a Dionysian drunkenness of the senses.²³

The textual basis of the first part, the Latin hymn "Veni creator spiritus," comes from the early middle ages. Supposedly, it was written by the Archbishop of Mainz, Hrabanus Maurus, around the year 800 or according to another legend, by Charlemagne.²⁴ Luther already strongly

perceived the force of the powerful words and the heaven-storming sweep of the ideas, and freely translated the poem into German in his hymn “Komm heiliger Geist, Herre Gott.”

Compared with this translation, the Latin version has the advantage of the solemn grandeur and rhythmic force of the language. The words stand like massive stones, each in itself a grandiosely perceived image, without any mediating, paraphrasing additions. Each thought is formed in the most concise mold, and, building up, one of them piles on top of the other. From the first call of the creator spirit to the jubilation of the Gloria, it is an uninterrupted series of ardent raptures, in such a feeling of devotion as could only be brought forth in a time whose religious conception was inwardly nourished by an erotic glow.²⁵ The poem, comprising seven and a half brief quatrains, is constructed with a clear architecture. It divides into three sections. The first contains the first two quatrains, the call and salutation of the Creator spiritus, here in Georg Göhler’s translation:²⁶

Veni, creator spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia,
Quae tu creasti pectora.

Come, Creator spirit,
Turn to those who are yours
And fulfill with your heavenly grace
The hearts that you have created.

[277] Qui paraclitus diceris,
Donum Dei altissimi,
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas
Et spiritalis unctio.

You who are called the comforter,
The greatest of God’s gifts,
Source of life, ray of love,
Heaven’s dew of purest grace.

Komm, Schöpfer Geist,
Kehre ein bei den Deinen
Und erfülle mit Deiner himmlischen Gnade
Die Herzen, die Du erschaffen.

Der Du Tröster heißest,
Des höchsten Gottes Gabe,
Quell des Lebens, Strahl der Liebe,
Reinster Gnade Himmelstau.

The second portion, the middle group, containing three and a half quatrains,²⁷ brings the content of the prayer: a plea for strengthening, enlightenment, peace, victory, grace, knowledge of the Holy Trinity:

Infirma nostri corporis	Unsere Schwachheit
Virtute firmans perpeti,	Stärke durch deine Wunderkraft.
Accende lumen sensibus,	Entzünde Deine Leuchte unseren Sinnen.
Infunde amorem cordibus.	Ströme Deine Liebe in unsere Herzen.
Our weakness	
Strengthen by your miraculous power.	
Ignite your light unto our senses,	
Stream your love into our hearts.	
Hostem repellas longius,	Den Feind wirf zu Boden
Pacemque dones protinus.	Und gib uns fürder Frieden.
Ductore sic te praevio,	Geh uns voran und führe Du uns:
Vitemus omne pessimum.	So werden wir Sieger über alles Böse.
Cast the enemy to the ground	
And grant us further peace.	
Go before us and lead us on:	
So will we be conquerors of all evil.	
Tu septiformis munere,	Der uns siebenfach begnadet,
Dextrae paternae digitus.	Du, des Höchsten rechte Hand.
You who have blessed us sevenfold	
You, the right hand of the highest.	
Per te sciamus da patrem,	Laß uns erfassen den Vater
Noscamus atque filium,	Und erkennen den Sohn
Te utriusque spiritum	Und glauben an dich, den Geist,
Credamus omni tempore.	Jetzt und immerdar.
Let us comprehend the Father	
And recognize the Son	
And believe upon you, the Spirit,	
Now and forever.	

Close upon this middle group follows, as the last section, the plea for heavenly grace and the glorification:

Da gratiarum munera,
Da gaudiorum praemia.
Dissolve litis vincula,
Adstringe pacis foedera.

Schenk uns der Gnade Heil,
Gewähre der Freuden Vorgefühl,
Lös' uns aus der Zwietracht Fesseln,
Knüpfe des Friedens Band.

Give us the salvation of grace,
Grant the anticipation of joy,
Free us from the bonds of discord,
Tie the band of peace.

Gloria patri Domino,
Natoque, qui a mortuis
Surrexit, ac Paraclito
In saeculorum saecula.

Ehre sei dem Vater, dem Herrn,
Und dem Sohne, der von den Toten
Erstanden, und dem Erlöser Geist
Von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit.

Glory be unto the Father, the Lord,
And to the son, who from the dead
Has risen, and to the Redeemer Spirit
From eternity to eternity.

It is a Pentecostal hymn, arisen and sung into the world out of the ecstasy of the Pentecostal experience, without dogmatic additions, standing particularly close to the modern artist through the glorification of the spirit as the bringer of revelation.

Mahler solved the task of a musical version of this poem in a simple manner. He takes over the three-part layout for the musical formation and builds the movement as a sonata form. Thus, he obtains a clear, contrasting grouping, an explication and concisely building final summation of the text. At the same time, he creates connections by means of thematic structure. They illuminate spiritual relationships and the flow of thoughts from within, [278] allowing the stream of feelings in the poem to shine through. The first portion of the text is the poetic

foundation for the exposition of the sonata, with the presentation and brief expansion of the two main themes. The second portion is fashioned as a development section. The presentation of the individual pleas provides a natural cause for the extensive treatment of the previous themes. With the call for enlightenment, “Accende,” a new theme comes into the development section. From the ardently determined “Geh uns voran” (“Go before us”) up to the closing plea for knowledge of the Holy Trinity, a fugue is unfurled. It links back into the reprise. This reaches at first, following musical rules and at the same time emotionally reinforcing the sense of the poem, back to the opening words, and joins directly onto them the penultimate verse of text with the plea for grace and heavenly blessings. As a coda group then follows the last verse, “Gloria in saeculorum saecula.”

The large, simple divisions become even clearer through orchestral interludes that divide the exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda. Without displaying any independent significance, they allow, as closing and preparatory intermezzi, the basic architectonic line of the movement to come forward. Thus, the poem and the musical interpretation merge into one and mutually penetrate one another. The organic laws that govern the design of the one also justify and vindicate those of the other.²⁸

The most artistic and also the most intellectually revealing thing about this movement however, as in the whole work, is not the musical and formal mastery of the text. It lies in the thematic references and the motivic ramifications. There are no filling or secondary harmonic voices. The song lines show an individual contour throughout, and the orchestra carries significant and pronounced thematic features even in places where it is subordinated to the vocal corpus and has an accompanying function. This musical and intellectual veining of the work,

extending into the smallest details, cannot be consistently led back to a conscious linkage and interpretation. Such methodology was foreign to Mahler. It would have required another, more serious and intentional compositional technique. Mahler's composition was based on intuitive understanding and visionary perception. As far as consciousness was at work here, it was consciousness of a higher, more clairvoyant kind that comprehended relationships and correspondences beyond intellectual boundaries. They make their musical representation into the preacher of spiritual consonances that belong to the areas of ideas and feelings, but remain inaccessible to logical explanation. This is true of the interweaving of thematic material from the first movement into the second part, where it experiences the actual internalized and enlivened interpretation. This is true of large parts of the musical development and of the transformation of individual themes within the first movement. Above all, it is true of the main theme. The earliest sketch of the entire work, it dominates the whole from the beginning to the conclusion. It is the seed that holds all vitality, all sweep, and all greatness within itself, and from which the growth of the mighty work rises up with the necessity of a natural law.

Over the surging *fortissimo* low E-flat of the organ and bass instruments, after which the E-flat major of the full organ [279] rings out, the double choir enters, *Allegro impetuoso*:

Allegro impetuoso

ff ff

Ve - ni, ve - ni, cre - a - tor spi - ri - tus!

[Example 8-1: organ, cellos, basses, m. 1, choir, mm. 2-5]²⁹

Based on the rhythm, it is a march motive, as so often in Mahler. In such reference to elemental rhythmic feelings lies an explanation for the memorability of Mahlerian themes, particularly this main theme of the Eighth. The shortening of the meter from measure to measure, determined by the declamation, heightens the impression of stormily, irresistibly bursting out. It is confirmed by the rhythm that seems as if it were carved in granite: the massively hewn half notes of the two opening measures, the succinct quarter-note beats, and the energetic dotted “Spiritus” conclusion. The harmonic substructure is simple. Tonic, subdominant, and dominant alternate in quick succession and the tonic impression is predominant. The decisive aspect of the expression lies in the rhythm and the melodic direction, in the upward swing of a seventh in the second measure and the purposeful downward leap of a fifth at the close. Particularly the leap of a seventh gives the theme, from its first hearing onward, the unforgettable characteristic feature of a powerful, fiery storming of heaven. It continues in trombones and trumpets, canonically crowded together, redirected to B-flat major:



[Example 8-2: trumpets and trombones, mm. 5-7]

The “Veni” call, now beginning in B-flat major, is repeated by the first choir. In the violins sounds an emphatic, sweeping supplementary motive, pressing upward *legato*, in contrast to the sharply hammered opening:



[Example 8-3: violins, mm. 8-10; flutes, oboes, clarinets, m. 10]

Intoned in alternation by both choirs, freeing itself from the imperative ecstasy of the opening declamation through smooth eighth-note slurs, the “Veni” calls continue to sound up to a brief E-flat-major cadence. Here, the energetic “Spiritus” from the close of the theme enters as the beginning of an idea that rises in forceful eighth-note waves in all male voices, *fortissimo*:



[Example 8-4: male choral voices, mm. 21-27, partly doubled by altos, mm. 24-26]

The orchestral voices, until now in groups and led primarily in unison, divide. The concentrated force branches into individual streams. The sound becomes more colorful, and also the dynamics, to this point held in a uniform *fortissimo*, become more terraced, obtaining swells from *forte* to *fortissimo* without altering the basic tone of surging fullness. The declamation gains liveliness and contrast with the entrance of the second line of the stanza, “Mentes tuorum visita.” The voices intertwine, and chromatic turns heighten the harmonic expression. The initially purely elemental picture obtains an exchange and play of contrasts until a majestically resounding D-flat major commands a halt. All voices quickly subside in a *ritenuto*, and the melodic line sinks downward. The *forte* of the first vision fades into a gentle *pianissimo*:



[Example 8-5: choral voices, mm. 43-45, some doubling from flutes, clarinets, horns]

The choral sound dies away, and solo voices are heard. The key changes [280] from the bright E-flat major to the mystical D-flat major. Soft woodwinds in a deep register and muted strings sound out *pianissimo*, and the tempo becomes “somewhat (but imperceptibly) more measured, always very fluently” (“etwas [aber unmerklich] gemäßigter, immer sehr fließend”). *Dolce espressivo*, the solo soprano intones the second theme while the closing line of the “Veni” quietly continues in the instrumental accompanying voices:



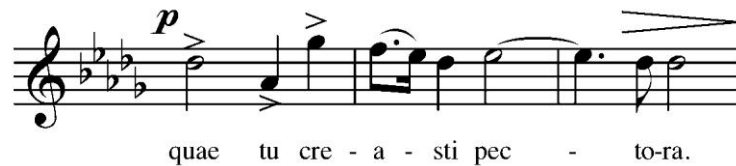
[Example 8-6: soprano 1 solo, mm. 46-52 (partially doubled by oboe); soprano 2 solo (doubled by first violins), m. 52; first violins (and English horn), m. 46; cellos (and bassoon), m. 47]

“And fulfill with your heavenly grace the hearts that you have created.” These words and the following of the second stanza, with the contented worship of the comforter and bringer of grace, provide the basic mood for the second theme and the side group that develops from it. A solo quintet without bass—two sopranos, two altos, and a tenor—leads. Only later do the baritone and bass come in. The gently rising, humbly bowing song melody, which builds hopefully at the second “Gratia,” obtains from flutes and oboes an intimately eloquent addition:



[Example 8-7: soprano 1 solo, mm. 56-58; second violins, m. 56; first violins, mm. 57-58; flutes and oboes, mm. 58-60; flute 1 and clarinet 1, mm. 60-61]

The main theme is also drawn into the mystical realm of moods. The repetition of “Quae tu creasti pectora” (“that you have created”) sounds to the “Veni” motive, which now, stripped of its eruptive character, nestles against the reverently pleading expression of the second theme in gently accented D-flat major:



[Example 8-8: soprano 1 solo, mm. 62-64; soprano 2 solo, mm. 63-64; oboe, mm. 62-63]

Whispering, the choir takes up the song theme, the plea for heavenly grace. With a simple rise from D-flat major leading to A-flat major, portions of the first theme start to sound: the “Spiritus” motive, assigned to the female voices of the first and the basses of the second choir:

pp pec - tor-ra, pec - to-ra, quae tu cre - a - sti.

quae tu cre - a - sti, quae tu cre - a - sti.

[Example 8-9: choral voices, mm. 76-80]

On top of that, there is the sweeping supplementary motive of the violins, which now serves the invocation of the “comforter”:

f *p*

Qui Pa-ra - cli-tus di - ce-ris.

[Example 8-10: solo sopranos 1 and 2, with violin doubling, mm. 80-81]

The expression is revived, obtaining more strength and shading without abandoning the tenderness of the basic mood. At “Spiritalis unctio,”³⁰ the solo soprano rises to a widely sweeping melodic completion of the song theme:

p Et spi - ri - ta - lis, et spi - ri - ta - lis,

molto espr. *cresc.* *f* *ff*

spi - ri - ta - lis, spi - ri - ta - lis.

[Example 8-11: soprano 1 and 2 (from m. 105) solo, mm. 98-108; flutes and oboe, mm. 100-101]

[281] The soloists are added, outshining the choir, leading boldly into the heights. In a powerfully reaching, dynamically forward pressing “Superna gratia,” pointing back toward the grand B-major cadence in the first movement of the Seventh Symphony, the first song group closes:



[Example 8-12: solo and choral sopranos and altos, mm. 118-123 (solo and choir 1 altos deviate from m. 121)]

Tempo primo, Allegro impetuoso, has been reached again. The singing voices have achieved it, and it continues to sound powerfully in the orchestra. Full organ, horns, trumpets, and woodwinds allow a chromatically overarching motive to resonate:



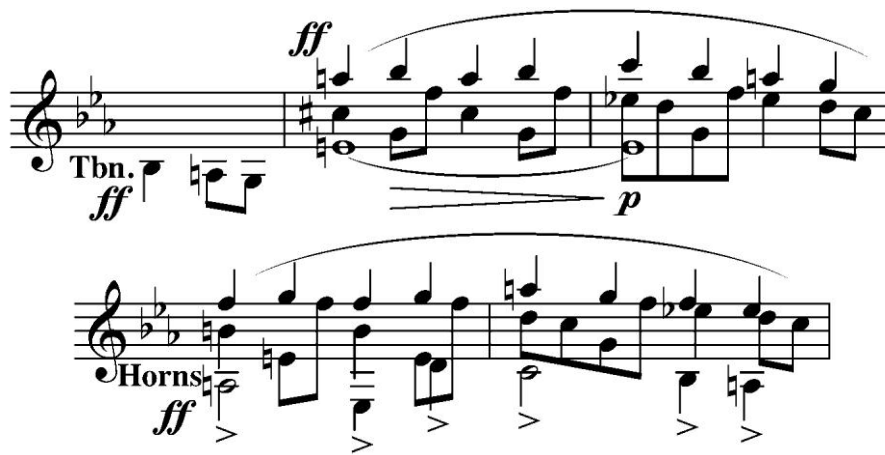
[Example 8-13: oboes 1 and 2, clarinet 1, horns 1 and 3, trumpets, organ (top line), second violins, mm. 122-123]

Like ringing bells, in canon, the “Veni” resounds from trombones and trumpets:



[Example 8-14: trumpets, trombones (and tuba), mm. 124-126]³¹

Hammering rhythms in strings and woodwinds accompany. A sudden chromatic aberration in trombones and trumpets leads into a somewhat restlessly undulating mood. The “Veni” theme sounds out in a rhythmically diminished and chromatically distorted transformation in the middle voices, pressing stepwise downward:



[Example 8-15: trombone, trumpet, mm. 130-132; flutes 1 and 2, piccolo, oboes, clarinets, horns, first violins (top voice), second violins, violas, mm. 131-134]

It is as if a shadow suddenly falls. The tempo becomes twice as slow, and a held pedal point A in the basses allows the key to change from E-flat major to D minor. Deep bells ring, horns and trombones call the “Veni” theme in D- and A-minor, and a muffled timpani roll provides an eerie background. In bassoons and cellos, the darkened opening of the “Veni” now sounds:

Bsn.
Vcl.

ff *dim.* *p*

[Example 8-16: bassoons and cellos, mm. 139-141]

The upper voices are silent. Accompanied by the violin motive from the beginning, now turned to minor, the choir intones the main theme in a plaintive transformation:

In - fir - ma no - stri, in-fir - ma no-stri cor po-ris

[Example 8-17: choir 2 altos, mm. 141-145; first violins (doubled by English horn), mm. 142-143]

“Our weakness strengthen by your miraculous power.” The consciousness of weakness is given by the sudden despondency of expression in the whispering tone of the choir and in the minor-key turn of the theme. The orchestra falls silent. Only the bass tone D, firmly resting in the depths, continues to sound. A solo violin wanders, “always somewhat fleetingly” (“stets etwas flüchtig”) and “without regard for the tempo” (“ohne Rücksicht auf das Tempo”), with lightly drifting sounds, as if lost, through the darkness. From the piccolo, brief, fearful calls sound. Something dreadful and hollow lies over this brief episode, from which the solo voices, with the sounds of the song theme set to “Firmans,” lead back to E-flat major:



[Example 8-18: alto 1 solo (doubled an octave above by first violins), mm. 156-162]

It is the same motive that previously, at “Imple superna,” had been assigned to only the instrumental voices [282] and now, in the moment of heavy oppression, experiences its interpretation through the singing voices. The mood is consolidated. Powerfully slowing with the inversion of the main theme, the choirs, as if in anticipation of that which is now coming, break off the swelling cadence immediately before the closing chord:



[Example 8-19: choral sopranos, altos, and tenors, with doubling from violins and horn, mm. 166-168]

“Firmans,” the plea for strength, is the confident closing call. The exposition has been given. It brought, in the musical relationship, the presentation of the two main themes. To them was added, as many times in earlier works of Mahler, a brief episodic development—as such is the D-minor passage “Infirma” to be seen according to its technical construction. Beyond this thematic presentation, the exposition brought an identification of the intellectual and emotional foundations. First the ecstatic call to the creator spirit in heroic E-flat major. Then the “Imple superna,” sinking into worshipful abandon in mystical D-flat major. On top of that is the D-minor “Infirma,” the confession of weakness, of one’s own powerlessness. Finally, the upturn to

the hopeful “Firmans,” with half-close on the dominant seventh chord B-flat, awaiting divine assistance. The poetic and musical plan is given with a strict insistence. The working-out begins, musically and technically speaking the development section.

As always with Mahler, and as in the design of this symphony as a whole, the architectonic structure is primary, also within the subsections. It would be difficult to determine to what extent Mahler followed a preconceived plan in the arrangement of the structure. In general, his creative style was of a hallucinatory kind, standing under the spell of the momentary inspiration. In times of creative activity, Mahler even appeared to himself as only a vessel, as a tool of compelling forces under whose influence the work arose, as if it had been dictated to him into the pen. It would be an exaggeration, however, to conclude from this that Mahler’s complete output, especially a work of the extent and unusual layout of the Eighth, somehow arose without any consciousness in a state of dreamlike rapture, that each measure was written down passively without regard to what was coming. It is difficult here to draw the line between conscious, unconscious, and subconscious. In the sense of philological conclusion, it is even impossible. But it must be regarded as certain that the anticipation of the overall formal rhythm, the idea of the complete architectonic plan, and the arrangement of groups and sections were all present for the composer during the act of creation. Perhaps he decided on individual changes here and there in the execution, discarding original plans and interpolating new ones. The essentials, however, were internally seen in advance and correspondingly prepared by him. To assume the contrary, one would not only render a disservice to Mahler as an artistic designer. At the same time, one would identify a crucial feature of his effectiveness—the impression of broad-lined architecture—as a coincidental secondary consequence. As distorted as the picture

would be of a Mahler who builds his forms according to a meticulously worked-out scheme, [283] it would be just as wrong to assume that these gigantic forms effortlessly fell from above as a gift to the composer. As with every great artist, the conscious and the subconscious also flow into each other with Mahler. As certain as the formal design is a matter of intuition, is in fact the most important precondition, the actual first inspiration, it is just as certain that one may view the detailed expansion as the result of a conscious work carried by a creative drive.³²

The exposition with its establishment and structuring of contrasts had shown such a plan, and the development shows a similar, clearly targeted formal design. It is divided, again corresponding to the textual pattern, into three parts. This three-part division of the layout, the most natural and effective for all large formal structures, already shows an inner methodology. The first part takes up the “Infirma” with a new strength that is prepared by the final developments of the exposition, continuing over into the tender plea for enlightenment. This plea, first presented in restrained, intimate humility, suddenly rises to a passionately excited upswing. The “Accende,” still sounding from before, becomes the starting point of a visionary, blazing elevation of the spirits and almost exceeds the beginning of the movement in its irresistible power. Following this outbreak of feelings, as the third and last buildup that summarizes all that has gone before, is the mighty fugue. Intellectual logic and the highest intensity of feeling flow into one, awakening an ecstatic conception of a superhuman revelation of the will, before which all individual energy gives way and can only surrender itself without resistance to this surging sea of sensual stimuli.

This is how Mahler builds his development section. If, despite its structure that testifies of the highest artistic consciousness, it flows in one stream, never awakening in the unbiased

listener a compulsion to consider the cause, then this is a sign that here, as in every genuine artistic creation, the extremely thoughtful design is always subordinate to inspiration.

An orchestral prelude introduces the first part. New colors and new sounds. A chaotic, fantastic world of mist set in motion by skittering apparitions. It is as if clouds suddenly sink upon the revelation of the exposition, and only memories of that which was just experienced flash through the imagination. Tempo primo, Allegro, “somewhat hurried” (“etwas hastig”). A timpani roll on B, with basses and cellos, triple *piano*, fixed like a pedal point upon the same pitch. The $\frac{5}{4}$ meter heightens the impression of unease and insecurity. Muted horns intone the main theme in inversion. Woodwinds and muted trumpets, flaring up in between, attempt a dissonant addition. Their dotted rhythms descend without melodic closure in violent string *pizzicati*. The basses sink to A-flat in a chromatic *tremolo*. Then fermatas and deep bell sounds. Once again the theme in muted horns, this time in its original form. The basses change to E-flat, and there is a timpani roll, *pianissimo*. Again the woodwinds attempt to take hold of the theme. The meter changes: $\frac{5}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$, always at very brief one- or two-measure intervals. Here or there, the theme briefly sounds out in an individual voice—in the horn, in the trombone, in string *pizzicati*—“always equally fast and hurried” (“immer gleich schnell und hastig”), calling and then immediately fading away again, an apparition in the mist that cannot be grasped. Similarly as before, the [284] transitional motive to the first “Infirma” sinks down in violin *tremolos* and flute sounds. The voices cease to chase after the theme. The A-flat of the basses is enharmonically changed to the dominant note G-sharp. With the change to C-sharp minor, a harmonic resting point has finally been achieved. “Twice as slowly as before” (“Noch einmal so langsam als vorher”), the minor-key transformation of the main theme sounds with strong

emphasis from the solo bass:



In - fir - ma, in - fir - ma nos - tri cor - po - ris

[Example 8-20: bass solo, mm. 218-219]

The remaining solo voices take up the call, which penetrates from the depths, and lead it further into the supplementary motive of the main theme:



Fir - mans per - pe - ti,

[Example 8-21: alto 2 solo, second violins, violas, mm. 223-224]

The seven-voice solo vocal passage, only supported by gentle woodwind and string registers, becomes clarified from the “passionate” (“leidenschaftlich”) C-sharp minor to F major. From there, “very gently and restrained” (“sehr zart und gehalten”), D major blooms, the plea for enlightenment: “Ignite your light unto our senses, stream your love into our hearts”:

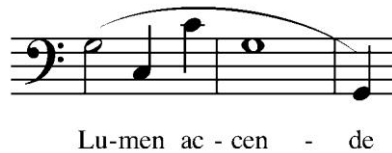


Lu - men ac - cen - de - sen - si - bus

[Example 8-22: alto 1 solo, doubled an octave above by solo violin, mm. 231-234; doubled two octaves above by flute, mm. 231-232]

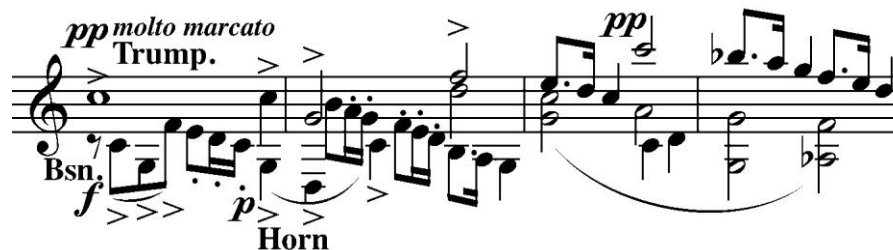
It is the “Imple superna,” already known from the second theme, in a new tonal transformation.

Pacified, the melancholy minor-key theme from the beginning of the development section sounds from the bass in pure C major:



[Example 8-23: bass solo, cellos and basses, mm. 235-237]

It continues to be heard through the ever more tenderly echoing solo voices, in alternation with the song theme. “Without expression” (“Ohne Ausdruck”), flutes and second violins quietly work in the “Gratia” call until the singing voices lose themselves as if floating away. The tempo sinks, becoming ever slower, into a dreamy twilight, and the instrumental voices also fade away. Then suddenly, in a threefold contrapuntal combination, the “Veni” rings out: in augmentation from trumpets, in double diminution from bassoons, and in simple diminution from horns:



[Example 8-24: bassoons, horns, trumpet, mm. 254-257]

That which was sought at the beginning of this section has been found, and is now revealed anew. Jubilation breaks out. The basses suddenly shift from the fading C to a *fortissimo* B. E major flares up. “Suddenly very broadly and with passionate expression” (“Plötzlich sehr breit und leidenschaftlichen Ausdrucks”), in the full orchestra, the main theme is briefly heard as a prelude, with a massive *molto ritenuto*. “With a sudden upswing” (“Mit plötzlichem Aufschwung”),

shattering with ecstatic force, a unison cry of double choir, boys' choir, and all soloists:

Mit plötzlichem Aufschwung

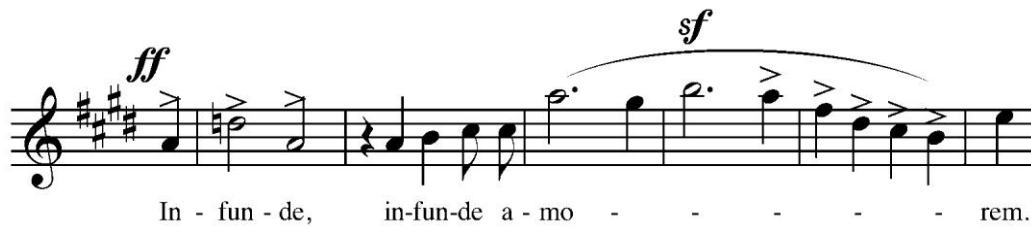
ff

Ac - cen - de, ac - cen - de lu - men sen - si - bus, lu - men sen - si - bus, sen - si -
bus, ac - cen - de sen - si - bus.

[Example 8-25: all solo and choral voices, mm. 261-267]

It is one of the most powerful moments in this work, in Mahler's oeuvre, in the entire literature. A moment that comes close to Haydn's grandiose "And there was light"³³ in the greatness of its inspiration, in the impact of its contrasts, in its emotional inner strength. A tremendous unison wave rises up, broadly calling out in mighty intervals, and then it turns back to the starting point, almost rushing over itself in ever more strongly accelerated rhythms, [285] pressing beyond it to the depths with boundless energy, as if hardly comprehending its own fullness. It is a revelation of the same elemental force from which the first theme also originates, and related to that theme in melodic and rhythmic details. Technically, it is the addition of a new theme in the development section, something to be found already in Beethoven. The key relationship is also similar to the classical model. In Beethoven, the new development theme appears within the first E-flat-major movement of the "Eroica" in E minor, and in Mahler within the E-flat-major movement in E major. The key is characteristic for Mahler precisely at this point, for an E-major breakthrough always signifies for him—in the "Totenfeier" of the second, in the slow movement of the Fourth, in the Andante of the Sixth, in the first movement sunrise of the Seventh—a celestial revelation, the opening of the heavens.³⁴ E major is also belted out here

with liberating force. As a confirmation, the theme sounds in D major in the repetition that directly follows, and is then led back to E major by the solo soprano³⁵ in an intense continuation of the line:



[Example 8-26: all voices, mm. 269-271; soprano voices, mm. 272-275]

Now the voices divide, carrying the message further, combining it with the previous themes, adding new ones from the profusely gushing spring. The choirs, which were unified at the “Accende,” are separated and stand again against each other, supplementing one another with antiphonal calls. The soloists are silent or added to the choral voices to enhance the luminous force. The boys’ choir by contrast, first used at the “Accende,” now emerges independently with a fresh, penetrating sound. It intones a victoriously marching theme, an anticipation of “Freudig empfangen wir diesen im Puppenstand” (“Joyfully we receive this man in the pupal state”) from the second part. In the choral basses, the “Veni” theme sounds in further combination with the “Accende”:

A - mo - rem cor - di - bus lu - men sen - - si - bus, a -

A - mo - rem cor - di - bus sen - si - bus, sen - si - bus lu - - In -

mor - rem cor - di - bus

fun - de in - fun - de a

[Example 8-27: boys' choir, mm. 274-280; oboes, clarinets, horns, mm. 274-277; choir 1 basses, bassoons, bass clarinet, cellos, mm. 275-278; choir 2, mm. 278-280]

Powerful chords in the strings, woodwinds, and organ strengthen the triumphal impression while horns and trumpets blow out the “Accende.” The forces gather themselves anew. Both choirs again come together. The key swings from an E-major cadence to G and C major. The mood of a battle breaks through. “Cast the enemy to the ground.” The voices stomp, and the shrill battle cry “Hostem” is yelled out:

Ho - stem re - pel - las, ho - stem, re - pel - las lon - gi - us, ho - stem.

[Example 8-28: choral sopranos and altos (and top voice of tenors), mm. 290-295]

A mighty eighth-note motion in scales rises from the string basses and takes in the upper voices. The boys' choir takes up the “Spiritus” theme:



Ho - stem — re - pel-las, re-pel-las — lon - gi - us,

[Example 8-29: boys' choir, mm. 304-306; choir 1 altos, horns, m. 304]

[286] In the other choral and solo voices, the “Hostem” and “Accende” motives continue like a march, closing together in this imperious combination:



Pa - cem-que do - nes, pa - cem-que pro - ti-nus.

[Example 8-30: choral soprano voices, mm. 308-311]

The energy is strained to the utmost level as the interweaving and intensification of the voices in free counterpoint has apparently arrived at its peak. The masses have found each other and come together. The call sounds to the leader who guides them to their destination. The spiritual battle in which all engage together according to a higher law, guided by the force of will, the heightened expression that leads beyond the manifestation of energy to action—this law that binds forces that were previously unrestrained is found by Mahler in the fugue. For the third time in the course of the development, the key pivots. From the passionate C-sharp minor of the “Infirma” it had changed, by way of the mediating D major, into the revelatory E major of the “Accende” with the G-major battle passage. Now, in the moment of triumphant confidence, it leads back to the heroic main key of E-flat major. “Go before us” resounds the call upon the sharply dotted “Spiritus” motive. As if to indicate who should lead the way, both themes of the creator spirit sound at the same time, the “Veni” and the storming continuation of the “Spiritus”:

Prae - vi - o, Prae - vi - o, prae - vi - o te duc-to-re sic vi -

ff *ff*

Prae - vi - o, duc - to - re prae-vi-o te,

te mus - o - mne, - o -

prae-vi-o, prae-vi-o, te prae-vi-o

[Example 8-31: all choral voices, mm. 312-317; cellos and basses, mm. 314-317; choir 2 sopranos, m. 318]³⁶

With this, the departure point for the crowning fugal construction is given. It is also divided into three parts again within itself. The architectonic principle that determines the movement as a whole remains definitive for all sections and subsections, again and again providing the basic feeling of a strong governing direction. The first part of the fugue already exhausts the complete text. This is now no longer interpreted in correspondence with the individual trains of thought. The word as a discernible text, until now declaimed with extreme accuracy and clearly defined conceptually, now steps back. As if by intent, the voices, set to different texts, are now so intertwined that recognition of the conceptual sense is impossible. There remains only the musical impression of an immense plurality that presses forward from the most varied directions, brought together and unified through the bonds of formal design. Particularly the first part of the fugue shows this convergence from all sides. It begins in E-flat major and firmly maintains this key until directly before its conclusion. To the two choirs are added as a third, independent group the seven soloists, and as a fourth the boys' choir, this last

belting out the themes in the manner of a *cantus firmus* over the mass of singing voices. All the devices of contrapuntal writing are called for. Both principal themes, initially assigned to the double choir and only accompanied in the orchestra by prominent chords after the beat, appear combined later on in inversion along with simple and double augmentation. The orchestra is drawn into the thematic development, and the choirs no longer alternate with each other, but are heard at the same time. The leading of voices winds itself tighter and tighter, always maintaining the urgent march rhythm, [287] until, after a brief swing of the choir over A major to D-flat major, a broad unison of the soloists proclaims “Now and forever” in a solemn augmentation of the “Spiritus” theme, while the “Veni” sounds out at the same time in the orchestra:

The image displays a musical score for two systems. The top system features a vocal line with lyrics "Per te cre da - - - mus" and a bass line labeled "Basses". Both parts are marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The vocal line includes a long note for "da" with a fermata. The bottom system continues the vocal line with lyrics "om - - - ni, om - - - ni" and the bass line. The vocal line also includes a long note for "ni" with a fermata. The bass line continues with a similar rhythmic pattern. The score is written in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature.

[Example 8-32: all solo voices, cellos and basses, mm. 360-365]

With that, the aspiration to E major is newly won. The previous development of the entire movement is reviewed in a sort of condensed and intensified version. The “Accende” sounds out, accompanied by the “Veni”:



[Example 8-33: choir 1 sopranos, mm. 365-369; choir 1 tenors and basses, mm. 365-367; boys' choir, mm. 365-366; choir 1 and 2 basses, horns, mm. 366-369; trombones 1 and 2, mm. 366-367]

This theme is also swept into the whirlwind of the fugue, losing its prevalent independence, its tonal symbolism, combining itself with the other thematic appearances. Even the “Imple superna” is stripped of its reverently imploring expression and, carried by the “Accende” in the basses, forms itself into a penetrating, upward sweeping cry of jubilation:



[Example 8-34: boys' choir, partially doubled by choral sopranos and altos, mm. 380-384; choral basses, cellos, string basses, mm. 381-383]

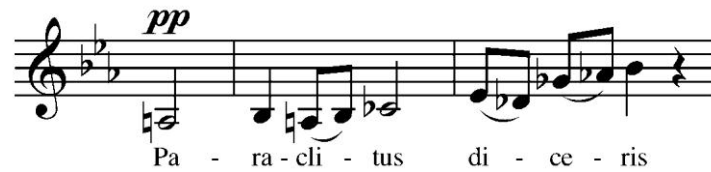
From the modulatory restlessness of the middle passage, the harmonic curve turns back to E-flat major. A pedal point spanning over 22 measures presages the coda group of the fugue. The soloists and both choirs crowd ever closer together until a unison wave of the choir, its sound penetrated by long-held calls of the solo voices, leads back into the reprise of the main movement with the “Spiritus” theme, rolling in inexhaustible breadth:



[Example 8-35: all choral voices, mm. 408-413; sopranos and tenors, m. 414]

The development, perhaps better called the heightening based on its significance, has ended.³⁷ The promise has been fulfilled. What sounded in the beginning of the movement as an urgent call, then disappeared in the mist at the beginning of the development, became hopeful again through the “Accende” and more and more certain through the fugue, that now appears as reality, as a living presence, similar to the opening and yet different. The pedal point B-flat of the fugue coda does not proceed to E-flat at the entry of the main theme. It continues to drone during the first measures up until the turn to B-flat major, identifying the return of the main idea as something that has been very long awaited. The words that Mahler allows to return here are a bold expansion of the original, but such an expansion that not only gives the poem a tighter structure, but also illuminates the sense—after the fact—of what has gone before. Mahler only uses the first line, “Veni creator spiritus,” then skips immediately to the second stanza, “Qui Paraclitus,” and jumps, omitting the stanzas used for the development, to the penultimate quatrain, the plea for “the salvation of grace, [288] the anticipation of joy, the freedom from discord, and the gift of peace.” The recapitulation therefore lacks the verses of the “Imple superna” that underlay the secondary theme. Not only the words are absent, but also the music that belongs to them: the mystical D-flat- and A-flat-major passage with the song theme. They are absent because they are now redundant. That reverent plea for the fulfillment of grace, that gentle, devoted dream is, in the face of that fulfillment, no longer necessary. There is now no

room for the unworldly contemplation and passivity of those moods.³⁸ Perhaps individual brief turns in the plea for peace echo the secondary theme:



[Example 8-36: choir 1 altos and tenors, mm. 434-436]

But these are only fleeting reminiscences. The Pentecostal spirit inexorably rushes on, with both choirs and the soloists alternating and calling in unremitting intensification. With the call for leadership, resounding with the greatest strength, “Go before us and lead us on: So will we be conquerors of all evil,” the concluding cadence is directed upward to a massive *ritenuto*, similar to that in the main section:



[Example 8-37: choir 2 sopranos, mm. 484-489; choir 2 altos and alto soloists, m. 484; choir 1 sopranos and soprano soloists, mm. 485-489]

A-flat major now provides the glorious conclusion, and a dramatic change to E major in the orchestra provides one more memory of the “Accende” awakening. Now the last transformation, the transfiguration. The “Infirma” theme, once a passionate C-sharp-minor lament of weakness, now, in the returning E-flat major, becomes a Gloria. Like a bright pealing of bells it sounds from the boys’ choir, which enters in majestic D-flat:



[Example 8-38: boys' choir, mm. 508-511]

It is a moment of shattering glory, of solemn rapture. A quiet timpani roll on F, a deep-breathed upward pressing scale motive in the horns, a shimmering *tremolo* in the strings. As from the highest spheres, the “Veni” theme sounds in double augmentation from both solo sopranos:



[Example 8-39: soprano soloists, mm. 512-518; trumpet 1, mm. 516-518]

It is as if the heavens were opening and the “Gloria” of the hosts sounding down to a reverently silent humanity. The vision only lasts for a few measures. Then the answer roars up from below: “Glory to the Father, to the Son, to the Redeemer Spirit from eternity to eternity.” Double choir, soloists and orchestra in the most extreme fullness. Sounding above everything, “posted in isolation” (“isoliert, postiert”), are four trumpets, three trombones, and the boys’ choir with the revelatory theme of the “Accende,” pointing to otherworldly heights:



[Example 8-40: boys' choir, mm. 564-572, doubled by trumpets posted in isolation, mm. 564-569]

The first part, which maintains the Allegro impetuoso character throughout with minor episodic deviations, is a flight of such unprecedented strength, without precedent even for the intensity of a Mahler, and such breathtaking force of momentum, that a continuation in the same line, even externally, seems hardly conceivable. [289] Even if another poetic subject of a similar kind had been found for the second part and the creative strength of the musician had been sufficient for such a renewed intensity—the uniformity in the principles of the design would have already caused a weakened effect. It would have either ruined the effect of the first part after the fact or, with more probability, the significance of the second. The receptivity of the audience would have necessarily collapsed, for continuous ecstasy loses its persuasive forcefulness. The first movement represents the utmost extent of that which the majority of listeners are capable of receiving, witnessing, and returning. It was not only about giving the first movement an analogous complement. The complement was to be designed in such a way that it deepened through contrast the sweeping ascent that preceded it, while still maintaining its loftiness. It was important to fill the intensity, which up to now has been mainly turned outward, with internal life, to give intimacy and the devotion of a religious vision to the upward impulse that impels a spiritual transcendence of the self. Mahler finds the poetic basis for such an assignment in the closing scenes of Goethe's *Faust*. The diversity in its world of appearances, the rich changes of mood, and the variety in the use of language all constitute a strong contrast to the hymn, whose effect comes through uniformity of idea and diction. Mahler forms these scenes musically according to their nature. A storm up to the summit does not provide the musical impetus, and it is not necessary to preserve any unity. The summit has been reached, and now the plurality of forms must obtain a single shape. The moment of intensification as a

determining force is abandoned, and a wide-ranging mosaic of pictures spreads out. Not in the sense of loosely connected episodes that are arbitrarily strung together. Cohesion and a large architectonic line are also present here. As rich as this part is in individual features, it appears just as closed as a whole. But the harnessing of the form is not prominent, as it was in the first part, as an artistic medium that is consciously applied. It remains latent in the subconscious of the listener. Above the richness and the constant alternation of impressions, he does not become aware of the secret connection that allows everything to emerge from one source, to strive toward one point. The persuasive means of the first movement was an inescapable power, a dictatorial compulsion. It grabbed the listener from the outside, so to speak, and dragged him into the whirlwind of events before which the individual must have felt like an atom. The second part loosens this bond, as it generally loosens everything that is material, and penetrates from within. The boundaries of the individual are not blurred by the formation of the massed crowd. They are laid bare by an ever more delicate atomization from the outer layers to the spiritual core. A life of fellowship from the idea of love is here as it was there. Both times, however, it acts from opposite directions and works through diverse means. There, an onslaught of the masses that bursts all boundaries, here purification and transfiguration of the most private personal experience.

This variety corresponds to the method of presentation. The main feature of the first part is activity. It makes its effect in dramatic liveliness. The main feature of the second part is lyrical calm. It is developed in a series of diverse scenes to an ever more profound introspection. Accordingly, the type of melodic stylization is different from that of the first part. [290] The themes of the first part aim for the sharpest formulation, prominence of accents, strict contour,

and urgency of linear expression. The themes of the second part have something suspended, easy, relaxed, and ethereal throughout. An appealing sound, flexibility, and the capability of persuasion by working not upon the affect, but upon the feeling, are emphasized in them. They rest upon the urge to mysticism, upon the gentle stirrings of a hidden inner life. Naturally, this opposition is not valid for every detail, only for certain basic stylistic features. It is most distinctly characterized in the way in which the main themes of the first movement are used within the second. Here, they unfold expressive values that are partially opposed to the earlier ones.

There were not only questions of style, of inner continuation and opposition, but it was above all the question of formal structure that was raised by taking up the plan for a *Faust* composition. Mahler composed the conclusion of the *Faust* dramatic poem from the Anchorite scene on through the Chorus mysticus, with cuts only in the songs of Pater seraphicus, Doctor Marianus, and the choir of blessed boys.³⁹ The poem does not offer the musician any distinctly recognizable breaks. It allows the imagination great leeway in regard to the musical treatment. The task was, not only in a spiritual sense, but also in terms of formal design, considerably more difficult than with the hymn of the first movement.

Mahler became the master of these difficulties as a symphonist. He divides the poetic model into three groups. As the first, introductory group he takes the purgatory scene of the mystics: the Anchorites and the three “holy men,” Pater ecstaticus, Pater profundus, Pater seraphicus. This scene of the “world conquerors,” imagined as the limbo between heaven and earth, becomes for him an Adagio. Following as the second section, a scherzo-like passage arises that is full of light, floating rhythms and sounds. It begins with the song of the angels in

the “highest Atmosphere” (“höhern Atmosphäre”):⁴⁰ “Gerettet ist das edle Glied” (“Saved is the noble member”). The conclusion is provided by the hymn of Doctor Marianus “in the highest, purest cell” (“in der höchsten, reinlichsten Zelle”): “Hier ist die Aussicht frei” (“Here the view is clear”), which finishes with the call to the queen of heaven. The last, actual final portion begins with the appearance of the Mater gloriosa, proclaimed by the choir of penitent women. It ends with the Chorus mysticus.

It should be emphasized that this division is not carried out in an externally discernible way and that one may not speak of an unquestionable intention of Mahler. One could set the boundaries of the sections differently, particularly the second and third, for they flow over into each other. That a similar basic idea operated in Mahler, however, must be regarded as certain, as long as one rejects the view of a purely compulsive, unconscious type of design as unworthy, as inadequate with respect to the great work of art. In addition, the three-part division, as with the “Veni” hymn, reveals the sense of the poem. It reflects the process of purification, of the stepwise ascent from the “holy mountain” of the Anchorites to the region of the angels and the “purest cell” of Doctor Marianus, and from there to the spheres of the Mater gloriosa. Thus, the musical formal design also corresponds here to the poem. In a certain sense, the symphonic construction provides the scenic architecture. The musician takes the law of his action [291] from the visual imagination of the poet. With this, he provides a more deeply internalized interpretation than the pictorial aspects of the staged production were ever capable of doing.⁴¹

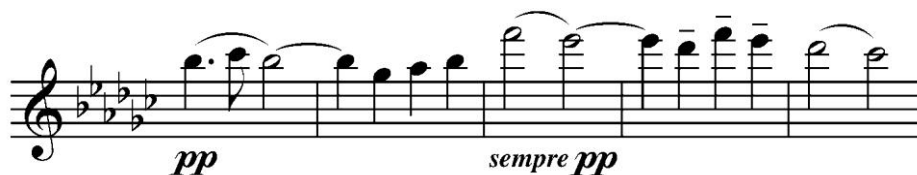
“Mountain glens, forest, rocks, desert” (“Bergschluchten, Wald, Fels, Einöde”), Goethe heads the Anchorite scene. Commentators believe that that he may have had the Montserrat Mountains in mind, upon which, besides an abbey, a large number of hermitages, distributed

along the slopes and upon the peaks, can be found. Others think of the holy Mount Athos in Greece, whose mighty plateau houses a religious free state—several thousand souls, many monasteries, chapels, hermitages—the center of the Anatolian faith. Mahler draws a primeval landscape, lying outside of times. He begins *Poco adagio* with an orchestral prelude, the most extensive instrumental passage of the work. E-flat minor is the principal key, but initially it can only be surmised. A quiet cymbal beat and a *tremolo* E-flat in the first violins, which buzzes *pianissimo* after a jarring entry, begin. In the string basses, an upward directed *pizzicato* motive emerges and rises in the second measure:



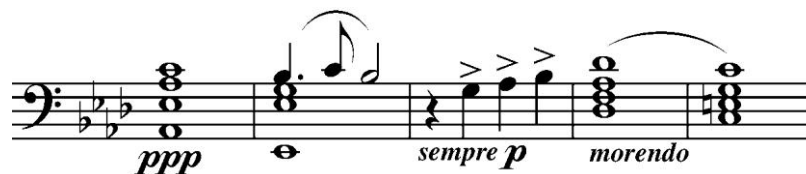
[Example 8-41: cellos and basses, mm. 2-3]

It is the “Accende” of the first movement, the call to light. There triumphantly resounding into the closing Gloria from boys’ choir, trumpets, and trombones, it now appears shadow-like, divested of its splendor. The scene that begins here already lies far above the region in which the first movement closed. The brightest appearance of the first part now sounds from the lowest depths. Layered above it are delicately floating sounds from flutes and clarinet, in a simple line without harmonic filling:



[Example 8-42: flutes, mm. 4-8, clarinet 1, mm. 4-5]

From the second measure on, the theme is the augmented repetition of the new form of the “Accende,” its continuation, as it were. Both appearances, the one pressing up from the depths of the strings and the one sinking down in the winds, strive against one another, and the constantly floating violin *tremolo* between them provides a shimmering celestial light. The wind theme first establishes itself harmonically in the A-flat major of the bassoons and cellos. In triple *piano* from the bass voices, it sounds solemnly, like a chorale, with a mystical closing turn that slides from D-flat major to C major:



[Example 8-43: clarinets, bassoons, violas, cellos, basses, mm. 24-28]

The violin *tremolo* suddenly dies away as horns and bassoons attempt to continue the chorale. It does not arrive at a conclusion and fades away. The opening returns again. The *tremolo* starts to flicker, the *pizzicato* “Accende” now sounds in the higher register of the middle voices, and of the descending wind theme only the beginning is heard, sinking stepwise from the A-flat of the flute to the *morendo* E-flat:



[Example 8-44: flutes 1 and 2, mm. 35-41]

Once again the incomplete chorale in E-flat major from bassoons and low strings. Then a turn back to E-flat minor. The two opposing themes appear for the last time, losing themselves in

dying sounds. Suddenly, a violent protest. The tempo becomes “somewhat quicker” (“etwas bewegter”), and *piano* suddenly changes to *fortissimo*. “*Appassionato*,” the horn intones the wind theme, and oboes continue it with a passionate extension: [292]

Example 8-45 shows two staves of music. The top staff is for Vcl. Horn, marked *ff appassionato*, with a crescendo and decrescendo. The bottom staff is for oboes, horns 3 and 7, and violas, marked *non legato* and *sf*.

[Example 8-45: horn 1, top voice of cellos, mm. 57-66; oboes, horns 3 and 7, mm. 62-66; violas, all cellos, mm. 64-66]

The melodic motion, driven by the urgent bass theme, increases, and the wind theme, encroaching onto the strings, forms itself into a broadly sweeping melody. Then it rises up again in the winds without concluding, unresolved, back to the height from which it originated:

Example 8-46 shows two staves of music. The top staff is for 2. Viol. Vcl. and 1. Viol, marked *ff* and *sf*. The bottom staff is for Ob, Vcl. Cb., and Fl., marked *f*, *ff*, and *pp*.

[Example 8-46: second violins, mm. 76-77; cellos, mm. 76-81, basses, mm. 79-81; first violins, mm. 78-79; horn 1, mm. 80-81; English horn, bassoons, mm. 80-87; oboes, violas, mm. 82-87; flutes, mm. 86-87]

The opening mood returns again. The violin *tremolo*, now on B-flat, the *pizzicato* motive of the strings in the depths, and floating above them, expanded by incisive interjections from the flute, the wind theme, hollowly fading in B-flat-minor sounds of the clarinets. A second outburst begins with a sudden *Più mosso*, *Allegro moderato*. The “Accende” motive is formed into a horn melody, and in the violins, a wildly ascending countermelody rings out, led in broken rhythms and a restless line:

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for Violin (Viol.), Oboe (Ob.), and Horn. The Violin staff begins with a *Più mosso* tempo marking and a *f* dynamic, followed by a triplet. The Oboe and Horn staves enter with a *ff* dynamic. The second system includes staves for Basses, Flute, and Oboe. The Basses staff has a *sf* dynamic. The Flute and Oboe staves enter with a *ff* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, accents, and an *accel. 3* marking.

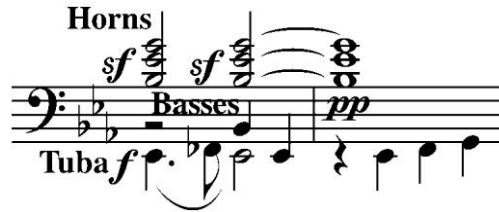
[Example 8-47: first violins, mm. 96-101; horn, mm. 97-103; oboes, mm. 97-98, 103; cellos, mm. 99-103; basses, mm. 101-102; flutes, m. 103]

Accellerando and *stringendo*, the motion presses forward. The violin theme reaches into the whole string section and the woodwinds. Horns and trumpets belt out the “Accende,” darkened into minor. The themes are violently driven against each other. There then sounds from the flute quartet, in triple *piano*, a bright E-flat major:



[Example 8-48: flutes, mm. 147-154; bassoon, mm. 153-154]

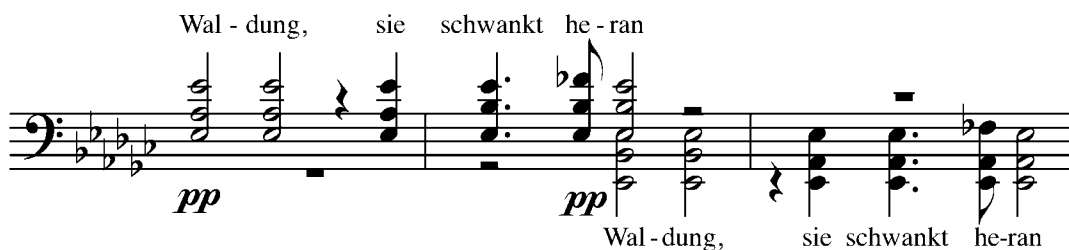
The minor-key beginning is reminiscent of the opening of the introductory wind theme, but leads it further in a new, songlike closed form. The theme obtains an interpretation later from the angel choir: “Ich spür soeben nebelnd in Felsenhöh’ ein Geisterleben, regend sich in der Näh” (“At this moment I perceive, in the mist of the rocky heights, a lively spirit stirring nearby”). Here the commentary of the words is still missing. The flute quartet has only the effect of a message from above, bringing major-key liberation out of minor-key agitation. The low voices fall silent. After the flutes finish, the lower woodwinds continue to quietly hum the melody. Trumpet and trombones attempt the same, but do not move beyond the beginning. They fall back into the original wind theme without [293] continuing it. As in the beginning, the *tremolo* E-flat of the violins sharply starts up, and the *pizzicato* motive sounds from the basses. The wind theme, however, now forced from its high regions into the depths, sounds from clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, and tuba to the softly fading E-flat-major close in the horns:



[Example 8-49: bass clarinet, bassoons, contrabassoon, tuba, horns, cellos, basses, mm. 159-160]

The instrumental prelude is at its end. It brought the two principal themes, the upward pressing one from the basses, and the downward sinking one in the winds. It combined them, weaving them into a passionate penetration, threw the angelic message of the flute choir into the gathering darkness, then allowed both themes, lying beside each other in the depths, to conclude in pure major. Thus, it provided an introduction into the basic mood of the piece and a brief hint of its entire course. The curtain rises, and the choir begins.

The instrumental picture is the same as at the beginning, the fantastic landscape of the holy mountain: the violin *tremolo* with the two themes that strive toward each other. Now the choir is added. “Holy Anchorites, spread across the mountain, lodged between clefts. Choir and Echo.” (“Heilige Anachoreten gebirgauf verteilt, gelagert zwischen Klüften. Chor und Echo.”) The stage direction is significant, as it gives instruction for the musical style. The choir does not flow in one stream. It sounds out in brief aborted chordal calls and sharp dotted rhythms. Coming from different heights, they sound into each other like an echo, in floating $\frac{3}{2}$ meter instead of the $\frac{4}{4}$ of the instrumental passage:



[Example 8-50: choir 1 tenors, choir 2 basses, mm. 171-173]

E-flat minor again provides the basic harmonic color. The choirs begin without thirds, heightening the unearthly impression with hollow fifths and fourths. The thematic grouping is transferred onto the vocal lines. In the upper voices is a suggestion of the wind theme. With the continuation of the text, the bass theme is pictorially adapted to the words:



[Example 8-51: choir 1 tenors and basses, choir 2 basses, violas, cellos, str. basses, mm. 180-182]

The mood remains uniformly mysterious. There is no building or increase of the instrumental voices. Height and depth are lodged directly above each other without harmonic filling. So sound the voices of the holy hermits who, startled out of their rest, observe a new event proclaiming itself in unusual signs of nature:⁴²

Waldung, sie schwankt heran,
Felsen, sie lasten dran,
Wurzeln, sie klammern an,
Stamm dicht an Stamm hinan.
Woge nach Woge spritzt
Höhle, die tiefste schützt.

The woods sway in this direction,
The rocks weigh down nearby,
The roots cling onto them,
The trunks are very close to each other.
Waves splash after each other,
The deepest cave protects us.

[294] The song suddenly falls silent. The development of the instrumental introduction is repeated. From low winds and strings the chorale sounds, dying away without closure as before. The unusual signs are multiplied, observed in astounded broken whispers that gradually take on a melodic outline:



[Example 8-52: choir 1 first altos, mm. 204-207, choir 1 first tenors, mm. 205-206, text “Löwen, sie schleichen stumm / Freundlich um uns herum.” (“Lions silently prowls / About us in a friendly way.”)]

The orchestra becomes silent except for the *tremolo* violins. The chorale tune now obtains its interpretation in the choir of holy men:



[Example 8-53: choir 1 tenors, mm. 209-213 (first tenors only, mm. 212-213), text “Ehren geweihten Ort, / Heiligen Liebeshort.” (“Honoring the consecrated place, / Holy refuge of love.”)]

The echo reverberates in the orchestra, and the hermit choir becomes silent. Out of their midst, the individual voice of Pater ecstaticus struggles upward, broadly presenting the newly won and established melody in a “very passionate” (“sehr leidenschaftlich”) E-flat-major song:



E - wi - ger Won - ne - brand, glü - hen - des Lie - bes - band, glü - hen - des Lie - bes - band,
 [Example 8-54: Pater ecstaticus (solo baritone), mm. 219-225, text “Ewiger Wonnebrand, /
 Glühendes Liebesband,” (“Eternal flame of bliss / Glowing bond of love,”)]

Siedender Schmerz der Brust,
 Schäumende Gotteslust.
 Pfeile, durchdringet mich,
 Lanzen, bezwinget mich,
 Keulen, zerschmettert mich,
 Blitze, durchwettert mich!
 Daß ja das Nichtige
 Alles verflüchtige,
 Glänze der Dauerstern,
 Ewiger Liebe Kern.

Seething pain in the breast,
 Effervescent joy of God.
 Arrows, pierce me through,
 Spears, overcome me,
 Clubs, crush me,
 Lightning, strike through me!
 That indeed all vain things
 May evaporate,
 And the radiance of the constant star
 Is the core of eternal love.

The brightly shining E-flat-major “Accende” in the trumpets crowns the heaven-striving song, in whose pure melodic sweep Pater ecstaticus, “soaring up and down” (“auf- und abschwebend”), moving between the spheres, appears to anticipate the rapture of last revelation.⁴³ But the things of the world have not yet been overcome. From the “nether region” (“tiefe Region”), the voice of Pater profundus rings out “with powerful tone” (“mit mächtigem Ton”). It is also an aspiring song, but still suffused with wild passions, inwardly moved by the sight of elemental images in nature as the symbols of the Divine. Moving back to E-flat minor, it provides the postponed interpretation of the Allegro portion of the instrumental introduction:

Mit mächtigem Ton

Wie Fel-sen-ab-grund mir zu Fü-ßen auf tie - fem Ab-grund las-tend
ruht, wie tau-send Bä - che strah - lend flie - ßen

[Example 8-55: Pater profundus (solo bass), mm. 265-273, text “Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen / Auf tieferm Abgrund lastend ruht, / Wie tausend Bäche strahlend fließen” (As a rocky chasm at my feet / Rests heavily upon a deeper chasm, / As a thousand streams brightly flow”)]

Zum grausen Sturz des Schaums der Flut,
Wie strack, mit eignem, kräftigtigen Triebe,
[295] Der Stamm sich in die Lüfte trägt,
So ist es die allmächtige Liebe,
Die alles bildet, alles hegt.
Ist um mich her ein wildes Brausen,
Als wogte Wald und Felsengrund,
Und doch stürzt, liebevoll im Sausen,
Die Wasserfülle sich zum Schlund,
Berufen, gleich das Tal zu wässern;
Der Blitz, der flammend niederschlug,
Die Atmosphäre zu verbessern,
Die Gift und Dunst im Busen trug,
Sind Liebesboten, sie verkünden,
Was ewig schaffend uns umwallt.
Mein Inn’res mög’ es auch entzünden,
Wo sich der Geist, verworren, kalt,
Verquält in stumpfer Sinne Schranken,
Scharfangeschloss’nem Kettenschmerz.
O Gott! Beschwichtige die Gedanken,
Erleuchte mein bedürftig Herz!

To the terrible plunge of foam into the flood,
As with its own powerful urge,
The tree trunk lifts itself uprightly in the air,
So is the almighty love
Which shapes and nurtures everything.
A wild roaring is around me,
As if forests and rocks were undulating,
And yet, lovingly in the rush,
The abundant water falls down the cavity,
As if now ordained to irrigate the valley;
The lightning bolt that crashed in flames
To improve the atmosphere
That carried poison and smog in its breast,
These are messengers of love, proclaiming
What eternally, creatively flows around us.
May it also kindle my bowels,
Where the spirit, cold and confused,
Torments itself, restrained by stunted senses,
Tightly closed chains of pain.
O God! Placate my thoughts,
Enlighten my impoverished heart!

Wide intervallic leaps, eruptive intensity and fervor of presentation, richly executed

instrumental accompaniment that presses in heightened animation, sharp-edged rhythm, and above all the declamatory treatment of the voice make this second solo song the antithesis of the first. The raw minor-key elements of the introduction are released and thereby pacified. This is the goal of the music. As with the song of Pater ecstaticus, it also here concludes with the triumphal “Accende” of the brass choir. To lead this “Accende” to its liberation from all inhibitions is the musical function of the first main group in the second part.⁴⁵ In the orchestra, the broad melody of the Ecstaticus song follows, the tempo increases, and a dynamic swelling proclaims a new outlook. The landscape of the Anchorites sinks away. The choir of angels “soaring in the higher atmosphere, carrying Faust’s immortal soul” (“schwebend in der höhern Atmosphäre, Faustens unsterbliches tragend”), becomes visible. In a B-major *fortissimo* from both female choirs, the “Gerettet” (“Saved”) sounds out to the theme of the “Accende” in its original form, confirmed and continued by the orchestra:

ff **Allegro deciso** **Woodw.** **f**


Ge - ret - tet ist das ed - le Glied der Gei-ster-welt von Bö - sen

[Example 8-56: all choral sopranos and altos, mm. 384-389; flutes, oboes, and clarinets, mm. 389-393, text “Gerettet ist das edle Glied / Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:” (“Saved is the noble member / Of the spirit world from evil:”)]

Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen;
Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
Von oben teilgenommen,
Begegnet ihm die selige Schar
Mit herzlichem Willkommen.

He who strives and endeavors,
Can be redeemed by us;
And when on him the love
From above has taken its part,
The blessed host will meet him
With a warm welcome.

[296] The entry of the previously unused women's voices in contrast to the now silent men's choirs, the change from the circle of flat keys to B major, the fresh Allegro deciso, flowing ever more freely, and the transparent treatment of the orchestra in comparison to the either mystical or solid and heavy sound of the first section, immediately give the impression of a higher, untroubled region. Almost exactly corresponding to the "Accende" of the first movement, only changing the powerful outburst there to the expression of transfiguration, the song continues to sound. The "Amorem cordibus" of the earlier boys' choir now becomes a "choir of blessed boys, circling around the highest summit" ("Chor seliger Knaben, um die höchsten Gipfel kreisend"):



Hän - de ver - schlin-get euch freu - dig zum Ring-ver - ein,

[Example 8-57: boys' choir, mm. 402-406, text "Hände verschlinget euch / Freudig zum Ringverein!" ("Join your hands together / Joyfully in the round dance!")]

Regt euch und singet
Heil'ge Gefühle drein!
Göttlich belehret,
Dürft ihr vertraun,
Den ihr verehret,
Werdet ihr schaun.

Become excited and sing
Holy feelings into your song!
Divinely instructed,
You may be confident
That him whom you honor
You will behold.

The women's and children's choirs are led in two voices against one another as if in a dance, and fluttering trills of woodwinds and strings heighten the lightness of mood. "Ever more quickly" ("Immer flotter"), the tempo presses to Allegro mosso. The singing voices become silent, and the dance theme "Hände verschlinget euch" sounds jubilantly like a refrain from trumpets, oboes, violas, and cellos. The trilling motion reaches over into all the agile instruments including the

horns, and low basses are absent. Everything is immersed in a sparkling light. The buildup leads higher, and the dazzling brilliance abates. As if from still more pure regions, after a brief mediating *molto leggero* G-major interlude, sounds the lovely E-flat-major *scherzando* of the “younger angels” (“die jüngeren Engel”), led in graceful thirds and sixths (according to the score “a selection of light voices from the women of the first choir” [“Auswahl von leichten Stimmen des ersten Frauenchores”]):

*Scherzando
grazioso
dolce*

Je - ne Ro - sen, aus den Hän - den
lie - bend heil' - ger — Bü - ße - rin - nen

[Example 8-58: choir 1 sopranos and altos (selection), mm. 443-452, text “Jene Rosen, aus den Händen / Liebend heil’ger Büsserinnen, (“Those roses, from the hands of / Loving holy penitent women,”)]

Halfen uns den Sieg gewinnen
Und das hohe Werk vollenden,

Helped us to win the victory
And complete the great work,

The cadence motive of the first grand “Veni” conclusion returns:

Die - sen, die - sen See-len - schatz er - beu - ten

[Example 8-59: choir 1 sopranos (selection), oboes, mm. 462-469, flutes 1 and 2, mm. 462-465, text “Diesen Seelenschatz erbeuten.” (“By capturing this treasured soul.”)]

A brief and light turn to E-flat minor, pointing back to the introductory wind theme, comes at the memory of the defeat of devils and demons:

p
Bö - se wi - chen, als wir streu - ten, Teu - fel flo - hen als wir —
tra - fen.

[Example 8-60: choir 1 sopranos (selection), mm. 474-482, flutes and oboes, mm. 478-482, text “Böse wichen, als wir streuten / Teufel flohen als wir trafen.” (“The wicked gave way as we scattered them / Devils fled when we met them.”)]

It is not the mood of a battle. The victory was won through the power of love, [297] and the “Rose” theme conquered the evil spirits. Only the lowering from E-flat to C-flat major hints at the lower sphere:

dolce
Statt ge - wohn - ter Höl - len - stra - fen, statt — ge -
pp dolce
wohn - ter — Höl - len - stra - fen

[Example 8-61: choir 1 altos (selection), bassoons, mm. 483-488, choir 1 sopranos (selection), mm. 489-492, text “Statt gewohnter Höllenstrafen” (“Instead of the usual punishments of hell”)]

The pain of love took hold of the demons; the dance rhythm breaks through:



[Example 8-62: choir 1 sopranos and altos (selection), second violins, mm. 496-499, text "Fühlten Liebesqual die Geister;" ("The spirits felt the pain of love;")]

The orchestral sound becomes ever more transparent, and the triangle comes into it. With a somewhat timid mockery, Mephisto is depicted in unusual descending six-four chords:



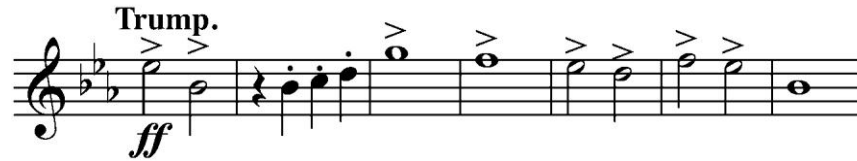
[Example 8-63: choir 1 sopranos and altos (selection), flutes, clarinets, mm. 504-507; sopranos only, mm. 508-511, text "Selbst der alte Satansmeister / War von spitzer Pein durchdrungen," ("Even the old master of devils, / Was pierced by sharp pain,")]

But now the play is over. E-flat major rushes forth, and all women's voices of the first choir unite in solemn sounds, moving in their childlike simplicity:⁴⁶



[Example 8-64: choir 1 sopranos and altos (all), mm. 512-520, text "Jauchzet auf! Es ist gelungen." ("Shout for joy! It has succeeded.")]

The trumpets brightly belt out the "Accende–Gerettet":



[Example 8-65: trumpets, mm. 520-526]

“Quickly” (“Flott”), the orchestral voices swing upward. Suddenly the cheerful strength appears to let up, and a shadow falls over the dynamics and rhythm. Basses sink from the pedal point E-flat to D, the tempo becomes slower, almost dragging, and D-minor sounds press to the forefront. It is the same change as after the first conclusion of the “Veni creator,” with the same heavy, downward pressing motive of fourths:



[Example 8-66: flutes, E-flat clarinet, first violins, mm. 540-543]

It is not only the instrumental interlude that points back to the first part. The choir also begins the earlier lament, though certainly with a different meaning. Once, the despondency due to the consciousness of weakness caused the minor-key recoloring of the “Veni” motive. Now it is taken over by the choir of the “more perfect angels” (“die vollendeteren Engel”), still carrying with it a reminiscence of the yet incompletely resolved past:



[Example 8-67: choir 2 altos (half), mm. 553-556, text “Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest / Uns zu tragen peinlich,” (“An earthly residue remains with us / That is painful for us to bear,”)]

Und wär' er von Asbest,
 Er ist nicht reinlich.
 Wenn starke Geisteskraft
 Die Elemente
 An sich herangerafft,

And were it made from asbestos,
 It is not clean.
 When strong spiritual power
 Gathers up the elements
 Unto itself,

With minimal deviations, the entire choral passage of the “Infirma” is retained: the mystical darkness of the color, the individually sounding “Veni” calls, the double choral layout. “Very warmly” (“Sehr warm”), the song theme of the first movement is heard from the solo alto:



[Example 8-68: alto 1 solo (with much doubling from violins), mm. 566-573, text “Kein Engel trennte / Geeinte Zwienatur / Der innigen beiden.” (“No angel will separate / The united dual nature / of these two intimately connected things.”)]

[298] Now the promise, from modulatory changes pointing to E-flat major with the inverted “Veni” theme:



[Example 8-69: alto 1 solo, mm. 573-580, text “Die ewige Liebe nur / Vermags zu scheiden.” (“Only eternal love / Is able to part them.”)]

“Ever more broadly, strongly coming forward” (“Immer breiter, stark hervortretend”) swells this

song of the solo alto, following the line of the “Infirma.” Now there is a significant deviation. There the song broke off uncompleted before the closing chord, and the fantastic development section began. Here the melodic conclusion glides directly into the confirming E-flat of the closing chord. The bridge has been forged. From the heights, harking back to the orchestral introduction of the second part, sounds the choir of “younger angels,” proclaiming the awakening to life with the bright strokes of the glockenspiel:

Frisch

Ich spür' so - e - ben, ne - belnd um Fel - sen-höh',

allmählich flotter

ein Gei - ster - le - ben, re - gend sich in der Näh!

[Example 8-70: choir 1 sopranos and altos (doubled throughout by high woodwinds), mm. 580-587, text “Ich spür’ soeben / Nebelnd um Felsenhö’, / Ein Geisterleben / Regend sich in der Näh!” (“At this moment I perceive / In the mist of the rocky heights, / A lively spirit / Stirring nearby!”)]

Die Wölkchen werden klar,
 Ich seh’ bewegte Schar
 Seliger Knaben,
 Los von der Erde Druck,
 Im Kreis gesellt,
 Die sich erlaben
 Am neuen Lenz und Schmuck
 Der obern Welt.
 Sei er zum Anbeginn,
 Steigendem Vollgewinn
 Diesen gesellt!

The clouds become clear,
 I see an excited throng
 Of blessed boys,
 Free from the pressures of earth,
 Joined in a circle,
 Taking refreshment
 In the new springtime and adornment
 Of the upper world.
 Let him, as a beginning,
 For his increasing gain of perfection,
 Be joined to these!

The glockenspiel becomes more prevalent. New hosts flock in. Into the choral lines that are redirected to G major sounds, “accompanying” (“begleitend”), as if still in the distance, the devout song of Doctor Marianus from the “highest, purest cell” (“in der höchsten, reinlichsten Zelle”).

Hier ist die Aussicht frei,
Der Geist erhoben.

Here the view is clear,
The spirit lifted up.⁴⁷

It is a constant lifting and floating. The choir of blessed boys begins to sing the erstwhile “Amorem cordibus” and later “Hände verschlinget euch” for the third and last time, greeting the redeemed one in their midst:



[Example 8-71: boys' choir, mm. 613-616, text “Freudig empfangen wir / Diesen im Puppenstand;” (“Joyfully we receive / This man in the pupal state;”)]

Also erlangen wir
Englisches Unterpfand.
[299] Löset die Flocken los,
Die ihn umgeben,
Schon ist er schön und groß
Von heiligem Leben.

Thus we attain
An angelic pledge.
Release the scales
That enclose him,
He is already handsome and great
With sacred life.

“Accompanying” (“Begleitend”), “gradually somewhat stronger” (“allmählich etwas stärker”), and then “suddenly emerging in the forefront with full voice” (“mit voller Stimme plötzlich hervortretend”), the song of Doctor Marianus, “enraptured” (“entzückt”), in sight of the opened

heavens:

Mit voller Stimme, plötzlich hervortretend

Hoch - ste Herr-sche-rin der Welt! — Las-se mich im blau - en
aus-ge-spann-ten Him - mels - zelt —

[Example 8-72: Doctor Marianus (solo tenor), mm. 639-649, text “Höchste Herrscherin der welt! / Lasse mich im blauen, / Ausgespannten Himmelszelt” (“Highest Mistress of the world! / Allow me, in the blue / Expansive firmament”)]

Dein Geheimnis schauen!
Billige, was des Mannes Brust
Ernst und zart bewegt
Und mit heiliger Liebeslust
Dir entgegenträget!
Unbezwänglich unser Mut,
Wenn du hehr gebietest.

To behold your secret!
Grant that, by which this man's heart
Has been so earnestly and tenderly moved
And, with the joy of holy love,
Is carried in your direction!
Unfailing is our courage
When you nobly command.

In solemn breadth streams the song, tender throughout, yet filled with deep ardor. Transparent wind harmonies support it, while intimately eloquent melodic string turns complement and flow about it. At the closing lines, it sinks from the E-major rapture into E-flat major with organ-like accompaniment:

pp *zart*

Plötz - lich mil - dert sich die Glut

Vcl. *p*

wenn du uns be - frie - - - dest.

espr.

[Example 8-73: Doctor Marianus (solo tenor), mm. 706-719; cellos, mm. 713-718, text “Plötzlich mildert sich die Glut, / Wenn du uns befriedest.” (“Suddenly the glow abates, / As you give us peace.”)]

The tempo becomes slower and slower. The motion almost dies, and only harmonies that slide into each other are still heard. In the solo violin, *molto devoto*, an unearthly, tender melody soars upward, the transfiguration of the Marianus song, which, accompanied by a mystical men’s choir, sinks into sacred contemplation:

Sehr langsam
Molto devoto
Solo Viol. *p*

Jung - frau, rein im schön - sten Sin - ne

steigernd

rein im schön - sten Sin - ne

[Example 8-74: Doctor Marianus (solo tenor), mm. 724-733; choir 1 basses, mm. 728-733 (top line only except for m. 732; solo violin, mm. 724-730, text “Jungfrau, rein im schönsten Sinne,” (“Virgin, pure in the loveliest sense,”)]

Mutter, Ehren würdig,
Uns erwählte Königin,
Göttern ebenbürtig.

Mother, worthy of honors,
Chosen queen for us,
Equal to the gods.

48

Unfinished, not capable of speaking the unspeakable, the song breaks off on the dominant.⁴⁹ The orchestra provides the E-flat-major conclusion with the “Accende” in the horns, and then swings to E major. All harps and the piano rush up, and in the wind and string orchestra are only celestial harmonies of an incorporeal sound. The ascent of the second large group is complete, the last sheaths fall, and the highest manifestation draws near. There sound only harmonium [300] (“weakest rank” [“schwächstes Register”]) and quiet harp chords. Above them, “soaring” (“schwebend”), *vibrando*, in “extremely slow” (“äußerst langsam”) Adagissimo, is the solo violin, “*espressivo*, but always *pianissimo*, on the fingerboard” (“*espressivo*, aber stets *pianissimo*, am Griffbrett”):

Äußerst langsam. Adagissimo.
schwebend
Viol.

pp *vibrando* *espr.* *aber stets pp* *sempre molto cantando*

[Example 8-75: first violins (or solo violin), mm. 780-795]

“Mater gloriosa soars above” (“Mater gloriosa schwebt einher”).

In unapproachable tenderness, the melody sings out, heightening the song of Doctor Marianus to the expression of rapture beyond comprehension. A curious spiritual relationship of

Mahler the lyricist with Robert Schumann, already noticeable in the second “Nachtmusik” of the Seventh Symphony, again attracts attention here. In this last version, Mahler’s melody corresponds with Schumann’s familiar lullaby for piano almost note for note. Not only to the line, but also to the emotional meaning. The rocking, dreamlike, soaring aspects of the mood, between slumber and wakefulness, provide the fundamental inner tone that is here spiritualized to a visionary trance.⁵⁰ Soft choral voices blend into the instrumental sounds, pleading for the penitent women who press themselves at the feet of the universal mother:

Dir, der Unberührbaren,
Ist es nicht benommen,
Daß die leicht Verführbaren
Traulich zu dir kommen.
In die Schwachheit hingerafft,
Sind sie schwer zu retten;

You, who cannot be touched,
Are not taken aback
When those who are easily led astray
Comfortably come to you.
Swept away by their weakness,
It is difficult to save them;

At first tenderly nestling into the orchestral sound, the voices gradually obtain their own melodic shaping:



Wer — zer - reißt aus eig - ner Kraft — der Ge - lüs - te Ket - ten?

[Example 8-76: choir 1 sopranos (with doubling from flutes, clarinets, and violins), mm. 825-834, text “Wer zerreißt aus eigener Kraft / Der Gelüste Ketten?” (“Who, with his own strength, can tear apart / The chains of desire?”)]

Wie entgleitet schnell der Fuß
Schiefem, glattem Boden?

How quickly does the foot slip
Upon sloping, smooth ground?

51

Radiantly, the Gloriosa theme rushes upward in the woodwind choir, piano and celesta accompany in *tremolo*, and harp arpeggios join in flowing motion. Together with the choir is heard the voice of the single penitent woman (Una poenitentium):

Du schwebst zu Höhen
Der ewigen Reiche,
Vernimm das Flehen,
Du Ohnegleiche,
Du Gnadenreiche!

You soar to the heights
Of the eternal realms;
Hear their entreaties,
You without equal,
Rich in grace!

The gently oncoming voices echo as if in a wide space. In contrast to the supplicants, the appearances of the three greatly blessed penitents, [301] Maria Magdalena (Magna peccatrix), the Samaritan woman (Mulier Samaritana), and Mary of Egypt (Maria Aegyptiaca), descend, directing their pleas above. “With restrained expression” (“Mit verhaltenem Ausdruck”), placed above dark woodwind chords, and only accompanied by the sounds of the harp, Magna peccatrix begins in a tenderly hastening, secretive tone:

Fließend
Mit verhaltenem Ausdruck

Bei der Lie - be, die den Fü - ßen__ dei - nes__ gott - ver -
klär - ten__ Soh - nes

[Example 8-77: Magna peccatrix (solo soprano 1), mm. 868-875, text “Bei der Liebe, die den Füßen / Deines gottverklärten Sohnes” (“By the love, which at the feet / Of your son, glorified by God”)]

Tränen ließ zum Balsam fließen,
Trotz des Pharisäerhohnes;
Beim Gefäße, das so reichlich
Tropfte Wohlgeruch hernieder,
Bei den Locken, die so weichlich
Trockneten die heiligen Glieder –

Let tears flow into balm,
Despite the scorn of the Pharisee;
By the vessel that so richly
Dropped down pleasant fragrances,
By the tresses of hair that so softly
Dried the holy limbs –

Falling into the words with a tender lament, as it were, exchanging the closing E-flat major with E-flat minor, Mulier Samaritana follows, accompanied by a “lamenting” (“klagend”) treble voice of flute and violin:

Fl. Viol. *f klagend* *pp*

Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon wei - land A - bram ließ die

Rit. *p*

Her - de füh - ren,

[Example 8-78: Mulier Samaritana (solo alto 1), flute, solo violin, mm. 906-914, text “Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon weiland / Abram ließ die Herde führen,” (“By the well, to which in former times / Abram had caused the flock to be led,”)]

Bei dem Eimer, der dem Heiland
Kühl die Lippe durft’ berühren.

By the bucket to which it was granted
To cool and touch the lips of the Savior.

In the orchestra, the alternation of the trombone quartet together with the tuba, then the cellos in fourfold division with the clarinets trilling on a low F, then the horns, provides an unusual harmonic and instrumental play of colors. The song line rises, and the accompanying upper registers with it:

bei der rei-nen, rei - chen Quel-le, die nun dort-her sich er - gie - ßet,

[Example 8-79: Mulier Samaritana (solo alto 1), mm. 927-935, text “Bei der reinen, reichen Quelle, / Die nun dorther sich ergießet,” (“By the pure, rich source / That now gushes from thence,”)]

A painting of sound in the tender rustling of the orchestra. The melody rises up in harps and flutes, as in a softly urgent plea, and intensifies at the close of the song, carried by accented harmonies of the wind section to a broad E-flat major:

ü - ber - flüs - sig, — e - wig hel - le, — rings — durch al - le

Wel - ten — fließt —

[Example 8-80: Mulier Samaritana (solo alto 1), mm. 946-956, text “Überflüssig, ewig helle, / Rings durch alle Welten fließt –” (“Overabundant, eternally bright / Flowing around through all worlds –”)]

In the orchestra, it sounds like the undulating ringing of high bells: string trills and *pizzicati*, flute trills, *tremolo* in celesta and piano, and also the idyllic double motive of the harps:

ff *dim.* *pp*

[Example 8-81: harp 1, mm. 964-967]

Becoming quieter, it continues to sound in the G-minor song of the third blessed penitent woman,

Maria Aegyptiaca:



Bei dem hoch - ge - weih-ten Or - te, — wo den Herrn man nie - der - ließ,
 [Example 8-82: Maria Aegyptiaca (solo alto 2), mm. 970-977, text “Bei dem hochgeweihten Orte, / Wo den Herrn man niederließ,” (“By the highly consecrated place / Where the Lord was laid to rest,”)]

[302] Bei dem Arm, der von der Pforte,	By the arm which, from the gate,
Warnend mich zurücke stieß;	Did warningly thrust me back;
Bei der vierzigjährigen Buße,	By the forty-year penance
Der ich treu in Wüsten blieb,	To which I remained faithful in the desert,

Auspiciously, the Gloriosa theme now begins in the orchestra, taken up by the singing voice:



bei dem sel-gen Schei - de - gru - ße, den im Sand ich nie - der - schrieb
 [Example 8-83: Maria Aegyptiaca (solo alto 2), mm. 1005-1012, text “Bei dem selgen Scheidegruße, / Den im Sand ich niederschrieb —” (“By the blessed farewell / That I wrote down in the sand —”)]

The song becomes more and more fleeting, sinking down to a ghostly whisper in A minor. The voices of the three women intertwine canonically:



[Example 8-84: Magna peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana, and Maria Aegyptiaca, mm. 1023-1028, text below]

Die du großen Sünderinnen
Deine Nähe nicht verweigerst,
Und ein büßendes Gewinnen
In die Ewigkeiten steigerst.

You, who to greatly sinful women
Do not deny your presence,
And who increase the benefits of penance
In the eternities.

A minor changes its sound to A major, and the whispering voices obtain strength, taking up the graceful melody in thirds from the rose chorus:

gönn auch die - ser gu - ten See - le,
gönn auch die - ser, die - ser gu - ten See - le,
die sich ein - mal nur ver - ge - sen,
die sich ein - mal nur ver - ge - sen,

[Example 8-85: Magna peccatrix, Mulier Samaritana, and Maria Aegyptiaca, mm. 1057-1069, text “Gönn auch dieser guten Seele, / Die sich einmal nur vergessen,” (“Grant also unto this good soul, / Which forgot itself but one time,”)]

Die nicht ahnte, daß sie fehle
Dein Verzeihen angemessen!

Which was not aware that it was lacking,
Your suitable forgiveness!

A “somewhat passionate” (“etwas leidenschaftlich”) F-major closing turn gives the veiled mysticism of this scene of the three female advocates a transitional conclusion.⁵² The voices fade away, and D major spreads out. As if dissolved into floating clouds, the tender registers of the instrumental voices vibrate. Above them in the shining light is the trembling, atmospheric tone of the vibrating mandolin. The voice of the “Una poenitentium (otherwise known as Gretchen, coming close [sonst Gretchen genannt, sich anschmiegend])” sounds out “warmly”

(“warm”) to the Gloriosa melody:

warm

Nei-ge, nei-ge, du Oh-ne - glei-che, du Strahlen - rei-che, dein Ant-litz

gnä - dig mei-nem Glück! ____

[Example 8-86: Una poenitentium (solo soprano 2), mm. 1104-1115, text “Neige, neige, / Du Ohnegleiche, / Du Strahlenreiche, / Dein Antlitz gnädig meinem Glück!” (“Turn, turn, / You without equal, / You abundant in radiance, / Your countenance favorably toward my happiness!”)]

Der früh Geliebte,
Nicht mehr Getrübte,
Er kommt zurück.

The beloved of my youth,
The one no longer troubled,
He returns.

The overflowing joy, still tenderly restrained in the vocal expression, breaks through in the orchestral postlude. “Imperceptibly becoming more fresh” (“Unmerklich frischer werdend”), it gives the melody [303] a dance-like character through a slight acceleration. The voices of the “blessed boys (coming close in a circular motion)” (“selige Knaben [in Kreisbewegung sich nähernd]”) powerfully strike up:

Frisch

Er ü - ber - wächst uns schon an mächt-gen Glie - dern, wird treu-er

Pfle - ge Lohn reich - lich er - wi - dern.

[Example 8-87: boys' choir, mm. 1141-1150, text "Er überwächst uns schon / An mächtigen Gliedern, / Wird treuer Pflege Lohn / Reichlich erwidern." ("He already grows above us / In his mighty limbs, / Our faithful care he will / Amply repay.")]

Wir wurden früh enternt
 Von Lebechören;
 Doch dieser hat gelernt,
 Er wird uns lehren.

We were removed early
 From the choirs of the living;
 But this man has learned,
 And he will teach us.

Harp, glockenspiel, piano, and harmonium provide the basic instrumental colors. It is a festive sound of bright, celestial harmonies in evenly striding half-measure rhythms, like a triumphal march of heavenly children, without gravity, only joyful play. The voice of Una poenitentium sings into it:

Vom edlen Geisterchor umgeben,
 Wird sich der Neue kaum gewahr,

Surrounded by the noble choir of spirits,
 The new arrival is hardly aware of himself;

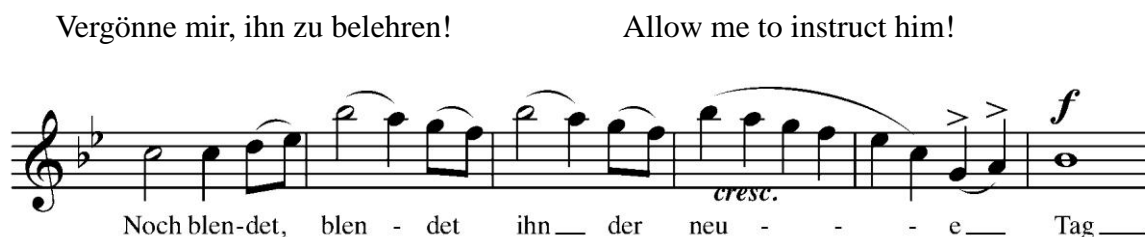


[Example 8-88: Una poenitentium (solo soprano 2, with some doubling from flute and oboe), mm. 1213-1219, text “Er ahnet kaum das frische Leben, / So gleicht er schon der heiligen Schar.” (“He scarcely perceives his fresh life, / And he already resembles the holy throng.”)]

Sieh, wie er jedem Erdenbände
Der alten Hülle sich entrafte,
Und aus ätherischem Gewande
Hervortritt erste Jugendkraft!

Behold, how every earthly band
Of the old shell is pulled away by him,
And how, from the ethereal garment,
The first strength of youth comes forth!

Once more, the “Imple superna” resounds in this song of Gretchen. Immediately before the life that had been wished for is granted through love, the plea for grace from the first movement is repeated by the love that brings fulfillment. The closing measures, stripped of all their former pomp, swell to the most heartfelt buildup of feelings:



[Example 8-89: Una poenitentium (solo soprano 2), mm. 1238-1243, text “Noch blendet ihn der neue Tag!” (“He is still dazzled by the new day!”)]

“Slowly” (“Langsam”). Solemn B-flat major. Basses, bassoons, and low harps sink

below in scales, the celesta plays *fortissimo* in *tremolo*, and everything else dies down from *piano* to *pianissimo*. The quiet “Accende” bass theme of the orchestral prelude is in horns and trumpets. A roll from the bass drum. It is as if everything still visible is sinking away. The highest devotion, requiring no strength, only the still vibrating shimmer of sound. The motionless silence of Divinity reveals itself in sound. *Dolcissimo*, moving in broad, almost inanimate sounds, the voice of the Mater gloriosa, with the melody playing around it in the flute and in harp harmonics, permeated by the “Accende”: [304]

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for Soprano 3, the middle for Flute 1, and the bottom for Horn 1. The tempo is marked 'Sehr langsam'. The lyrics are: 'Komm! He - be dich zu hö - hern Sphä - ren. Wenn er dich ah - net, folgt er nach. Komm!'. The bottom staff also includes the instruction 'Horn pp' and 'Choir pp'.

[Example 8-90: Mater gloriosa (solo soprano 3), mm. 1249-1273; flute 1, mm. 1249-1254, 1267-1268; harmonium, violas, cellos, mm. 1249-1252; harp 1, mm. 1249-1260; horn 1, mm. 1253-1272; violins, mm. 1256-1260; trumpet 1, mm. 1261-1264; oboe 1, harp 2, mm. 1267-1268; solo violin, mm. 1269-1272; choir 2 tenors and basses, m. 1273, text “Komm! Hebe dich zu höhern Sphären! / Wenn er dich ahnet, folgt er nach.” (“Come! Raise yourself to higher spheres! / When he knows of you, he will follow.”)]

“Komm!” (“Come!”), the choir whispers almost without tone. Only the harmonium continues to sound, *pianissimo*. Silent worship, reverent trembling. “Komm.” A tense F-sharp

pushes itself into the B-flat-major triad. Doctor Marianus, “prostrate in worship” (“auf dem Angesicht anbetend”), as the first to compose himself, begins in a “hymnlike” (“hymnenartig”) way:



[Example 8-91: Doctor Marianus (solo tenor), mm. 1277-1283; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 1278-1279, text “Blicket auf [zum Retterblick], / Alle reuig Zarten,” (“Look upward [to the view of salvation], / All you tender repentant ones,”)]

Those who have been constrained down in reverence and moved by miracles now arise and gather together. The coda of the verse as well as the music now begins. The “tenderly, but intimately” (“zart, aber innig”) sounding words and tones of Marianus announce the solution to the mystery. The introduction theme of the winds, and with it the inconceivable experience, now obtains its interpretation:



[Example 8-92: Doctor Marianus (solo tenor), mm. 1291-1320, with doubling from clarinets (mm. 1291-1294), oboes (mm. 1295-1298), first violins (mm. 1299-1303, 1308-1310), flute, oboe, and clarinet (mm. 1311-1315), text “[Blicket] auf zum Retterblick, / Alle reuig Zarten, / Euch zu seligem Glück / Dankend umzuarten! / Werde jeder bessre Sinn / Dir zum Dienst erbötig! / Jungfrau, Mutter, Königin, / Göttin, blebe gnädig!” (“[Look] upward to the view of salvation, / All you tender repentant ones, / So that you, in blessed happiness, / May be changed with gratitude! / May every better sense / Be ready at your service! / Virgin, Mother, Queen, / Goddess, be gracious!”)]

Effusively, as if reaching out into eternity, the melody is drawn out and broadened, flying upward, as it were, upon rushing sounds of harps and solemn organ harmonies, drawing everything behind it in a mightily expanding sweep.⁵³ The double choir and boys take up the song.

Undulating string and woodwind chords increase the soaring expression to the heights of the Gloriosa theme. A *tremolo* from celesta, piano, and mandolins provides a shivery atmosphere of ethereal brightness. Gently pressing forward, leading upward chromatically in enharmonic exchanges, the song continues to ring out:



[Example 8-93: choir 1 sopranos, mm. 1344-1353, doubled by flutes and clarinets, mm. 1344-1351; choir 2 sopranos, doubled by violins, mm. 1352-1356, text “Werde jeder bessre Sinn / Dir zum Dienst erbötig!” (see previous example)]

A mighty *crescendo* wave floods upward, driving from E-flat to E major. The Gloriosa melody is taken by the choir and orchestra. The splendor of the open heavens shines above all. In a moment of greatest rapture, the worshipful choir sinks back again to E-flat major, breaking off on the dominant. [305] “Blicket auf” sounds from horns and woodwinds, and “Gloria” resounds in triple *forte* of trombones and harps. Then the picture slowly dissolves in flickering sounds of harps, celesta, harmonium, and flutes, melting and dying away.

The miracle has occurred. Darkness falls. Deep meditation follows the revelatory experience. Winds fall silent. Muted strings in triple *piano* begin with an E-flat-major chord. “Beginning very slowly” (“Sehr langsam beginnend”), the Delphic words of the Chorus mysticus are heard from the united choirs “like a breath” (“wie ein Hauch”):

Chorus mysticus
ppp Wie ein Hauch

Al - les Ver - gäng - li - che ist nur ein Gleich - nis,
das — Un - zu läng - li - che, nur wirds Er - eig - nis,

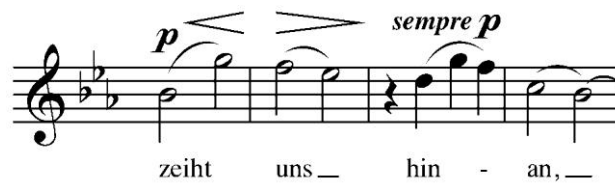
[Example 8-94: choirs and strings (with some reduced harmonies), mm. 1449-1458, text “Alles Vergängliche / Ist nur ein Gleichnis; / Das Unzulängliche, / Hier wird's Ereignis;”⁵⁴ (“Everything transient / Is but an imitation; / The unattainable / Is here experienced;”)]

Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ist's getan;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan.

The indescribable
Is accomplished here;
The eternal feminine
Draws us onward.

It is again that wind theme of the instrumental introduction. Here it finds its last interpretation as

a symbol of the transitory. United with it and soaring above it is the theme of the Eternal Feminine, the Gloriosa melody:



[Example 8-95: choir 1 sopranos, mm. 1478-1481, text of last line]

“Ewig, ewig” (“Ever and ever”), the melody continues to call. In trembling excitement, the Chorus mysticus resounds one more time, bringing all voices together, carried by the sound of the organ, intensified to the highest fullness by the orchestra, which enters behind it. It is not executed with repetitions or expansions. It is very brief, and for just one time, with the power of an ancient motto for humanity. “Posted in isolation” (“Isoliert postiert”), trombones and trumpets blast out the augmented “Veni creator.” From the orchestral trumpets and trombones throb the bell strokes of the Gloria. In solemn, majestic E-flat-major grandeur, the song of love concludes.⁵⁵ [306 blank]

NOTES

- 1 In this context, it is somewhat ironic that Theodor W. Adorno, writing in 1960, arrived at just such an assessment of the Eighth in particular. At a time when Mahler's importance was slowly being rediscovered and more objectively evaluated, Adorno provided one of the most eloquent voices. His attitude toward the Eighth, while not categorically dismissive, is skeptical enough to have had a profound influence on later writings about the symphony. Adorno approaches the Eighth from the perspective of its "official" status as Mahler's "*magnum opus*," and essentially arrives at the conclusion that the work could in no way accomplish that to which it aspired. See *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 138-42. The following is characteristic of Adorno's view of the symphony: "Like no other composer of his time, Mahler was sensitive to collective shocks. The temptation that arose from this, to glorify the collective that he felt sounding through him as an absolute, was almost overwhelming. That he did not resist it is his offense. In the Eighth he repudiated his own idea of the radical secularization of metaphysical worlds, uttering them himself. If on this one occasion one were to speak of Mahler in the language of psychology, the Eighth, like the Finale of the Seventh, was an identification with the attacker. It takes refuge in the power and glory of what it dreads; its official posture is *fear* deformed as *affirmation*" (p. 139, emphasis mine). The "attacker" in this case is probably the nationalistic, anti-Semitic establishment and its celebration of grand collective achievements of the time such as the architecture of the Ringstraße in Vienna. These attitudes eventually gave rise to the Nazis.
- 2 The word "abwartend" ("waiting," "watching" or "biding") appears to be a printing error and makes no sense in this context. The word should surely be "abwertend" ("pejorative" or "derogatory").
- 3 Original, "Lieder und Gesänge" two words that are impossible to differentiate in English. Mahler's songs had been released in an edition with that title. In general, "Gesänge" tend to be more serious or even religious.
- 4 The English word "artistic" does not really convey Bekker's meaning here with "alles artistische."
- 5 Much more of this letter, including the account of the visit to the bell factory, is included by Bekker in the chapter on the Second Symphony (see pp. 217-19 and p. 245, note 35). The long quotation there ends with the passage quoted here, although its inclusion there has the effect of an afterthought.
- 6 Cf. Matthew 11:15, 13:9, Mark 4:9, Luke 8:8.
- 7 Cf. Matthew 5:3, 11:28, 15:16.
- 8 These thoughts are echoed in Donald Mitchell's sympathetic, but highly objective analysis of the Eighth. In several places, Mitchell juxtaposes the "new simplicity" of the Eighth's language (particularly in the strophic solo arias, or "songs" in Part II) with that of the *Kindertotenlieder* and especially *Das Lied von der Erde*. In one of these discussions, he makes the following perceptive observation: "There is a public/private dichotomy in the output of most artists. In his Eighth, Mahler made a wellnigh total commitment to the public half of the equation . . . I have no doubt that it was Mahler's clear intention to compose a massive, heaven-storming work – a celebration of God the creator and the creative spirit in man, and of divine and human love, no less – that would speak, through its deployment of comparably massive resources, to a *mass* audience" (*Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* [London: Faber & Faber, 1985, rev. edition Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2002], p. 574).
- 9 These comments provide more insight into Bekker's attitude toward the influence of song in the symphonies. The association of the *Wunderhorn* texts with "the Divine and the transcendent" is obvious from "Urlicht" in the

Second, “Es sungen drei Engel” in the Third and “Das himmlische Leben” in the Fourth.

- 10 The idiom “mir nichts, dir nichts” can be translated in several ways. This seems the most appropriate here.
- 11 Hermann Kretzschmar, *Führer durch den Konzertsaal, I. Abteilung: Sinfonie und Suite*, 6th ed. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1921), p. 812. Bekker’s source was most likely the fourth edition (1912).
- 12 The provenance of this sketch page is unknown. It may or may not be the same sketch that was released by Alfred Rosenzweig in the Vienna newspaper *Der Wiener Tag* on June 4, 1933. Donald Mitchell gives an extensive history of Rosenzweig’s publication of the sketch, elaborates on its implications, and even includes the original article (See *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 529-32, 635-37). The sheet was reproduced in the newspaper, but the original has not survived, and, according to Mitchell, it is very difficult to decipher in the newspaper. Like Bekker, Rosenzweig obtained the page from Alma. The version published by Rosenzweig differs from Bekker’s, not only in the reversal of the middle movements, but in the inclusion of a programmatic idea for the Scherzo. It reads as follows: “(1) Veni Creator, 2) Caritas, 3) Weihnachtsspiele mit dem Kindlein [Christmas games with the [Christ] Child]. Scherzo, 4) Schöpfung durch Eros [Creation through Eros]. Hymne.” Mitchell brings attention to the fact that two *Wunderhorn* texts, a sort of slumber song and a nursery song, both addressed to the infant Jesus, were written in Mahler’s hand on the back of a sheet that contained an early draft arrangement of the “Veni creator” strophes. He is convinced that these texts are connected to the planned Scherzo. Both sides of the sheet, including both the “Veni creator” material and the *Wunderhorn* texts, are reproduced by Mitchell (with transcription) on pp. 508-11 of *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*. Other writers have also made reference to this sketch, including Constantin Floros (*Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], pp. 217-18) and John Williamson (“The Eighth Symphony” in *The Mahler Companion*, edited by Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], pp. 409-10). Both Mitchell and Williamson suggest that the music for the blessed boys and younger angels in Part II may have had their origins in the “Christmas Games” Scherzo.
- 13 See the chapter on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 336-37 and p. 390, note 15. Mitchell also makes connections between the Eighth and Fourth Symphonies, particularly the use of the “heavenly” key of E major at important junctures in both works (see *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 526-28).
- 14 Floros believed that “The Birth of Eros” may have been a projected setting of a part of the Classical *Walpurgisnacht* from *Faust II*, an idea which eventually developed into the setting of the final scene. He presented this argument in his first Mahler volume, not available in English (*Gustav Mahler*, vol. 1, *Die geistige Welt Gustav Mahlers in systematischer Darstellung* [Wiesbaden: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1977], pp. 129-32).
- 15 The persistence of this idea, which originated with Richard Specht, has caused no small degree of consternation among Mahler scholars. Mitchell is adamantly opposed to the concept. For example, he says that “dwelling on the opening orchestral *Adagio* as a ‘slow movement,’ or rather as the symphony’s ‘slow movement,’ may well hinder us from comprehending its unique function and singular organization,” which, he argues, is as a prelude or overture to Part II (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 545-56). He then continues to offer counter-arguments to the idea of analyzing Part II as a combination of three “movements” (pp. 545-49). Williamson goes even farther, saying that “in retrospect this notion is so foolish as to leave the Mahlerian marveling at the longevity which bad ideas may possess (“The Eighth Symphony,” p. 407). Even a traditional analyst such as Floros states that “closer analysis will reveal that the structure of the section is too complex for such a relatively simple scheme” (*The Symphonies*, p. 227), continuing that the recurrence of Part I material as well as the return and anticipation of passages within Part II make such a sectional division problematic (pp. 227-30). Bekker’s

adherence to Specht's idea is a major argument for his grouping of the Eighth with the First and the Sixth as a symphony that rises in a direct line toward the Finale (see the discussion in the "Symphonic Style" chapter, p. 62). Mitchell even casts doubt on that idea: "...while there can be no doubt that the concluding section clinches and crowns Part Two, it perhaps does not represent the resolution of the total work – a true *dénouement* – that more often than not is the prime objective of the Mahlerian finale, a target toward the achievement of which the formal organization of those movements that can be categorized as finales proper is dedicated, no matter how striking and radical their divergences from symphonic orthodoxy. Part Two of the Eighth is unorthodox enough, but not, I suggest, in ways that mean that one can introduce it into the tradition of symphony and then 'read' it as a modification of existing practice, as an alternative to it, or as innovation – or as a combination of all three" (p. 548). The analysis of Part I as a sonata form raises different issues which will be discussed in note 28 below.

- 16 Both Mitchell (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, p. 613) and Williamson ("The Eighth Symphony," pp. 417-18) attribute the transmission of this remark to Specht, and both interpret it in a decidedly non-nationalistic way.
- 17 This "humanist" view can be contrasted with Adorno's comments cited in note 1 above. Adorno seems suspicious of the aesthetic impulse, as if this is a kind of nationalistic, proto-Nazi type of agenda. The Holocaust and our knowledge in hindsight of Hitler's way of mishearing Wagner surely colored Adorno's view, but it is not necessarily more believable than those of Bekker and others, who hear the work as a more sincere hymn to love, brotherly and otherwise.
- 18 Bekker's somewhat idealistic idea here contradicts the more common perception that the counterpoint in certain passages of Part I is so dense and overloaded that individual lines do not always come through as clearly as Mahler perhaps intended.
- 19 Here, Mitchell strongly echoes Bekker: "...the particular compositional method of the Eighth was neither the result of inspiration working on a reduced power nor the manifestation of a failure to meet the challenge of the texts. On the contrary, the symphony was exactly what Mahler wanted it to be. Given his aesthetic intention, which was, I believe, to create a work of mass appeal, it was obligatory to find a manner, a method, that would serve that intention" (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, p. 589). The folk qualities mentioned by Bekker in some of the melodies are certainly a part of this. The elaborate counterpoint is not as simple and direct in the same sense. Here, the "mass appeal" would lie in the sheer volume and monumental impact of the sound. For Adorno and other critics, this may have resonated more as grandiloquence or bombast.
- 20 See the discussion of these provocative ideas in the introduction, p. 11.
- 21 Stravinsky would make statements of a similar kind about his approach to setting Latin in the *Symphony of Psalms*, *Oedipus Rex*, and other works. See, for example, Ruth Zinar, "Stravinsky and his Latin Texts" in *College Music Symposium* 18/2 (1978), pp. 176-88. Zinar quotes Stravinsky as saying in his autobiography that "the text . . . becomes purely phonetic material for the composer. He can dissect it at will and concentrate all his attention on . . . the syllable" (p. 177).
- 22 Bekker makes reference to a very famous letter to Willem Mengelberg. See *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, revised and edited by Herta Blaukopf (Vienna and Hamburg, Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1982), pp. 311-12 (Letter 360).
- 23 This mention of the Dionysian brings to mind Nietzsche's pairing of the Dionysian and the Apollonian in *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (*Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, 1872). The sort

of universal “song” described by Bekker, along with his earlier emphasis of the communal “Volk,” reflects Nietzsche’s perspective. It is also very different from the intensely private Rückert settings.

- 24 The attribution of the text to Hrabanus Maurus is now generally regarded as incorrect. The author is unknown.
- 25 This fascinating comment implies several things, including perhaps the idea that hymns to Mary could represent a kind of sublimated eroticism. If so, then this is an interesting foreshadowing of the appearance of the Mater gloriosa in Part II of the symphony. The organizing impulse of “Caritas,” already mentioned by Bekker, is a definite link to the *Faust* text and its closing reference to “das ewig Weibliche.”
- 26 Dr. Georg Göhler (1874-1954) was a composer, musicologist, and longtime director of the Leipziger Riedel-Verein, which took part in the 1910 premiere of the Eighth in Munich. Göhler played a large role in the choral preparation for the premiere. He had also written several articles on the rehearsal process for the Eighth and in celebration of Mahler’s 50th birthday for the *Dresdener Neuesten Nachrichten*. Mahler requested that he prepare the German translation of “Veni creator” for the program book at the premiere. Göhler remained a close friend to Mahler in the last year of his life. He was the recipient of the famous letter in which Mahler described his final revisions to the Fifth Symphony. See *Briefe*, ed. Blaukopf, pp. 394 (Letter 451), 398 (Letter 458), 403-4 (Letter 463, one of the latest surviving letters), 428 (biography). The English translation here is from Göhler’s German, not from the original Latin. Bekker was presumably making use of the program book from the premiere.
- 27 The “half” stanza referred to by Bekker was originally a quatrain, but Mahler cut the last two lines, as he did some words from lines that are included by Bekker here. He also rearranged the stanzas, transferring the “half” stanza from third to fifth position. The two couplets of the stanza now in third position (the first in Bekker’s “second section”) were reversed. Mitchell provides several sources of the text, including, in addition to the draft sheet referred to in note 12 above, a liturgical version and the text as set by Mahler. See *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 508-17. The source of the seventh and penultimate stanza is obscure. It appears neither in Mahler’s handwritten draft nor in any liturgical source. Mahler apparently received it from Fritz Löhr. See also Floros, *The Symphonies*, pp. 219-20.
- 28 Mitchell, while he does not dispute the existence of a sonata structure in the movement, believes that it is of far less importance than is ascribed to it by Bekker, Floros, and others. He does not see a true duality in the first and second themes, but recognizes the real contrast in the “positive” and “negative” use of one of the principal motives, first presented by the brass in mm. 5-7, between the first two “Veni” statements (given by Bekker in the example labeled as 8-2). Mitchell prefers to view the hymn as a large-scale motet, fitting within the “compilation style” of the whole symphony, which allows for the assembly of various forms, genres, and styles and their unification through a narrative or dramatic idea. See *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 533-45. *Faust*, not coincidentally, is another example of a work with a virtuosic compilation of genres, forms, and styles. Mitchell’s view seems more consistent with Bekker’s description of the work as a grand, universally appealing song. Sonata form would not be a natural choice for a song. Another interesting analysis of the movement is provided by David B. Greene, who, in contrast to Mitchell, sees dualities throughout the movement, all of which are overcome by the development section, leading to a recapitulation where, instead of a resolution, the perception is of a fulfillment that has already occurred. In other words, the process is more important than the arrival. His comparison of the movement’s process and the normal sonata process with different views of religious aspiration and fulfillment is intriguing. While Mitchell asserts that the second “Veni” theme (given by Bekker here in the example labeled as 8-4) is not recapitulated until the coda, Greene sees it as having been absorbed into the first “Veni” theme. It is of interest that, in contrast to most analysts, Greene begins the

development section not with the large instrumental interlude at m. 169, but earlier, with the first “Infirma” material at m. 141 (seen by most analysts as a “closing section”). He does this in order to preserve the duality between the two “Infirma” themes within the development section, but it makes the already disproportionate relationship between the vast development section and the other sections even greater. On the other hand, it brings the size of the exposition closer to that of the recapitulation. See Greene, *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), pp. 199-220. The return of E-flat major before the interlude, either at the end of the exposition or at the beginning of the development, undermines a traditional analysis in sonata form.

- 29 Because of Bekker’s inclusion of the complete text above, the text of the examples will not be included in the captions, as it was in such examples as those for the finale of the Fourth Symphony (and in Part II of this symphony), where the examples were often Bekker’s only quotations of certain portions of the text, sometimes in context with purely textual lines that preceded or followed them, and where inclusion of the text and translation in the example captions was the only way of including the entire text.
- 30 “Spiritalia unctio” [sic] in original.
- 31 It is primarily in instrumental passages such as this where Mitchell sees the “negative” pole of the principal motive given in Example 8-2. See *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 536-39.
- 32 These observations also call to mind the anecdote, shared by both Alma and Ernst Descey, that Mahler composed the music beyond the text he had at the time, and found that when he received an “authentic” version of the text from Löhr, the words precisely fit the music that he had “overwritten.” This anecdote and its plausible implications are examined by Mitchell (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 523-29) and Williamson (“The Eighth Symphony,” pp. 410-11).
- 33 Since Haydn’s *Creation* is most commonly performed in English, I translate this text.
- 34 See the chapters on the Second Symphony, p. 177 and p. 242, note 13, on the Fourth Symphony, pp. 344-45 and p. 391, note 21, on the Sixth Symphony, p. 505 and p. 539, note 21, and on the Seventh Symphony, p. 574 and p. 615, note 26.
- 35 Both solo sopranos and all choral sopranos sing this line.
- 36 The second measure of this example (m. 313) erroneously indicates a G–B-flat dyad. It is actually an octave G from the men of choir 1; there is no B-flat.
- 37 The word play here between “Durchführung,” the term generally used in German for the development section, but which literally means “leading through,” and “Emporführung” (“leading upward”), is not possible to replicate in English.
- 38 These ideas have an echo in Greene’s assessment of the recapitulation. See *Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 212-20 and note 28 above.
- 39 Bekker never clearly states that Pater seraphicus is cut entirely.
- 40 When Goethe’s stage directions are quoted by Bekker, they will be given in English with the original German in parentheses. When actual text is quoted, this will be reversed, with the English translation in parentheses.

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- 41 Bekker's caveats about the three-part division are interesting. It is clear that even at this early stage, there were at least some misgivings about the idea of three movements being rolled into one. Where it is preserved in later analysis, there always seem to be similar caveats. Greene, for example, preserves the Adagio, Scherzo, Finale model, as it assists him greatly in the presentation of his highly philosophical analysis, but divides the "Scherzo" and the "Finale" into four alternating sections (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 229, 233). The differences in perceptions of genre are also noteworthy. Floros considers the first part "cantata-like" and the second as "closer to the realm of music drama," with *Parsifal* as the most obvious model (*The Symphonies*, pp. 226-27). Mitchell, firmly holding to his perception of the first part as a motet, applies the "cantata" label, with convincing argument, to the second part, specifically stating that it is *not* a music drama, but conceding that the cantata genre is already close to the theater. He also allows for an application of the "oratorio" genre, particularly at the entry of the first male soloists. Ultimately, it is the freedom offered by either or both of these genres that is important: "No doubt this very lack of clear-cut formal and stylistic boundaries and definitions was exactly what Mahler wanted and exactly matched to what we perceive to be his formal needs as revealed to us in the actual composition of Part Two" (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 572-73).
- 42 With one minor (and arguably justifiable) exception, Bekker includes the entire Goethe text as set by Mahler, dividing it between musical examples and quotations in the body, often directly following an example with the text that succeeds it in the body. This is similar to the procedure used by Bekker in other vocal movements, such as the Finale of the Fourth. When an example is the only quotation of certain lines of text, the text and translation will be included in the caption for the example. The text will not be redundantly included in the captions for examples whose text is repeated in the body (such as the two directly above).
- 43 Greene's analysis of the "Adagio" convincingly divides it into instrumental and vocal sections where each instrumental section has a corresponding texted passage. Even the anticipation of the "Scherzo" (here given as Example 8-48) that precedes the first vocal entry is analogous to the beginning of the actual "Scherzo." It is in the discussion of the Pater ecstaticus solo where Greene's interpretation is most interesting. He divides the solo into three phrases, where the first two strive increasingly toward a goal and the third, which culminates in the "core of eternal love," does not actually fulfill or actualize that goal, but absorbs and intensifies the process (a smaller-scale reflection of the recapitulation in the first part). Love, then, is pure, subjectless loving. The subject of the process is totally merged with and submerged into the process itself (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 222-26). This is not far removed from Mitchell, who focuses much of his discussion of Part II on these solo arias or songs and their role in establishing "Love" as the central topic of Part II (and the symphony). He divides the solo into an AABA' form, where B is developmental and A' is a reprise. He also emphasizes the expanded melisma at the end and states that this "rightly leaves us in no doubt that the idea of 'immortal love's core' is the core of the symphony's Part Two" (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, p. 575).
- 44 Bekker inserts two lines of dashes here without explanation. They seem to indicate Mahler's omission here of the Pater seraphicus speeches and the responses from the blessed boys.
- 45 Indeed, as Floros illustrates, Pater profundus breaks into the "Accende" theme three times, always in imitation with instruments. These passages all speak of "love and enlightenment" (*The Symphonies*, pp. 230-31). Mitchell emphasizes the vividness of the nature imagery and the more complex musical language, but also points out that the formal outline is similar to that of Pater ecstaticus (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 577-78). Greene also notes the similarities between the solos, but indicates that the forward pressure is more violent. Like the earlier solo, this one also, via the "Accende" theme, absorbs that pressure without actualizing its goal. (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 226-28).

46 In contrast to the temporal method of the “Adagio,” Greene sees these emphatic “arrivals” in the “Scherzo” section as arrivals without effort, essentially the opposite effect, but still one that illustrates that pure love is not about a process toward an arrival. There is either a process or an arrival, but the one is subsumed in the other. With this in mind, Greene splits the “Scherzo,” considering the solo of Doctor Marianus and the appearance of the Mater gloriosa as the first part of the “Finale,” with the “Scherzo” resuming again for the three penitent women, Gretchen’s first appearance, and the return of the blessed boys (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 228-31). Mitchell contends that this music is “not a scherzo at all, but a relatively fast flowing and brightly colored choral song.” He prefers to consider the central section of Part II as being in the “Wunderhorn” spirit. He emphasizes the predominance of higher voices and the absence of adult male voices throughout the section. Like Greene, he considers the following “Infirma/Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest” passage to be an interruption (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 579-80).

47 Bekker does not include the remainder of Doctor Marianus’s lines that are under the younger angels and blessed boys. They are as follows:

Dort ziehen Fraun vorbei,
Schwebend nach oben.
Die Herrliche, mitteninn,
Im Sternenkranze,
Die Himmelskönigin,
Ich seh’s am Glanze.

There women pass by,
Soaring up above.
The glorious one, in their midst,
In a wreath of stars,
The queen of heaven,
I see it in her splendor.

48 Bekker inserts another line of dashes here, presumably because Mahler omits seven lines of the Doctor Marianus speech at this point.

49 The solo of Doctor Marianus is another passage that elicits much commentary. Greene believes that the solo is yet another variation on the concept of aspiration and fulfillment. Here, the music that aspires toward fulfillment is itself transformed. Instead of an “arrival,” the “aspiring” music itself is, in its course, unconsciously changed into music that “sustains” a fulfillment. The ensuing appearance of Mater gloriosa is not an arrival, but a departure for the Marianus solo that precedes it (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 232-37). For Mitchell, the Marianus solo is curious in that E major is a key of aspiration and he *begins* there (including the first entry of the harps with a chord on E). He then modulates to the home key of E-flat for the end of his solo, which can be interpreted as him not quite being able to reach the heights of the Virgin Mother herself. This seems to be confirmed when the music swings back to E for the orchestral “Gloriosa” music. While Mitchell speculates elsewhere that it may have been logical for the symphony to end in E, the symbolism of the key meant that the symphony, like Doctor Marianus, could not end there (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 575-77 and 600, n. 16).

50 Bekker refers to the “Schlummerlied,” Op. 124, No. 16 by Schumann, which is in E-flat rather than E. Mitchell sees the materialization of the Virgin Mother as the moment when Part II crosses the nebulous boundary between dramatic cantata and music drama. He also notes that the entry of the chorus, beginning with male voices alone, women joining only to swell the choral sound later on, is symbolic of the choir being pulled upward by the “Eternal Feminine” (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 580-82).

51 Another line of dashes from Bekker indicates two lines of text omitted by Mahler.

52 Mitchell makes an interesting comparison of this canonic trio with the music of the three boys from Mozart’s *Zauberflöte*, but thinks Mahler’s own use of a canon by Weber as a vocal trio for his completion of that

composer's *Die drei Pintos* is a more intriguing model (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 587-88).

- 53 Greene asserts that this Marianus solo "is a condensed version of the whole Finale," stating that it gathers together all the motifs from Part II. He says that Marianus's plea is heard as having already been answered, and that an urgent striving toward a culmination is supplanted directly by a sustaining of that culmination without a direct arrival. This is the same process heard in his earlier solo (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 238-39).
- 54 Goethe's word "hier" is in the score; The word "nur" in the example before "wird's Ereignis" is a misprint.
- 55 For Greene, the Chorus mysticus represents the same process as the two Marianus solos, but on a greatly expanded scale: "Human consciousness has not only been fulfilled, but in having already been fulfilled, it is also transformed. Hushed awe has been changed into unbuttoned exhilaration" (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 239-40). Mitchell spends most of the last part of his analysis discussing the Chorus mysticus, including a comparison of Mahler's setting to those of Liszt (in the *Faust* Symphony) and Schumann (in the "*Faust*" *Scenes*). He arrives at a conclusion that Mahler's "compilation style" encompasses a sort of summary of composers who have come before him. He compares the *Wunderhorn*-like middle section, with its bright female chorus, to Wagner's flower maidens in *Parsifal*, for example. It is also a summation of his own works to that point. A comparison of this E-flat-major conclusion to that of the Second Symphony is almost unavoidable. See *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 182-92. One of Mitchell's last points is that by the end of the symphony, any sense of duality is erased, a point also made by Greene, although his concept of the initial dualities is, as has been mentioned, rather different from Mitchell's.

[307]

DER ABSCHIED
(THE FAREWELL)

[308 blank]

[309]

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE
NINTH SYMPHONY

[310 blank]

[311] **Mahler** closed his first symphonic cycle with the song of heaven in the Finale of the Fourth. The song of love completes the second cycle, summarizing all that has gone before. The course seemed completed. But a new cycle already begins. *Das Lied von der Erde* (*The Song of the Earth*) provides the first sounds.

The inner laws in the development of this artist have something moving about them. Seen from the human, psychological, and aesthetic standpoints, it is the picture of constant Becoming, driven by necessity. Everything obeys as if under an inevitable command, and yet no intention, no speculative will is behind it. The works stand in stark contrast to one another. Each appears to be the closing personal declaration. And yet each already carries the following one within itself, and if one observes this, the earlier one appears only as a preparation. From the youthful dream of the First, beyond the *Wunderhorn* fantasies, and beyond the mighty tensions of the instrumental symphonies, up to the Eighth, is an uninterrupted ascent, driven up to a feverish intensification of forces in the last work. Here was the summit. What could still come? The miracle of change occurs. Three new, large works begin to grow. If one makes an assessing comparison of them to the complete previous works, it almost appears as if the actual Mahler were only now beginning to speak. The giant symphonic works up to the Eighth are again only a preparation to release Mahler's tongue for the most unusual things that were given him to say.

Taken in a human, psychological way, it is a breakdown, in its certainty of feeling a frightening premonition of the end. There was no external reason for this. Mahler was 48 years old when he composed *Das Lied von der Erde* in the summer of 1908. The loss of his position in Vienna hurt, but had brought at the same time a freedom from petty battles. If Mahler had to leave his directorial work unfinished, then he could give himself to creating with less hindrance.

Financial worries did not burden him. During the winter months, he had committed himself to America, with unusually advantageous conditions, as a concert conductor. This activity also gave him rich stimuli for his creative work. He was healthy in body, insofar as a man of his nervous constitution can be called healthy. Resignation may be explainable from external experiences, from the change of his practical activity for the conscious secondary purpose of earning money, from the failure of his plans in Vienna. It is not, however, sufficient to justify the change in the curve of feeling in his creative work.¹ Here, an inner transformation took place whose ultimate causes are not comprehensible to the mind. The unprecedented intensity of the Eighth, the rebirth of a world from the idea of love, had a terrible reaction as a consequence. The consciousness of being finished suddenly awakened the realization of being alone. The resounding universe had been created, and the creator appeared to himself as redundant. But the man in him had not yet entered into the heaven of his visions. An ardent hunger for life and love broke through, allowing him to feel the gulf between a divinely enthused soul and an earthly, yearning drive with deep sorrow. The command to take farewell struck the man who only in his own ecstasy [312] had matured to understanding the gratifying value of existence. It is the tragedy of the prophetic nature that goes blind from the clairvoyance of its own view, lovingly encompasses everything in the intoxication of creative rapture, but in reality is incapable of grasping anything more. From this inner conflict of one wandering between worlds emerge the three final works of Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies. A third cycle is formed, different from the two earlier ones in basic poetic mood and in musical style, and yet growing up out of them, the most intimate of Mahler's creations.

The two first named works were completed, but did not reach performance in Mahler's

lifetime. Of the Tenth Symphony, only the sketch of the score, which is completely carried out, exists. It is an instrumental work, laid out in five movements, beginning with a viola Adagio in D-sharp minor. The lines of notes frequently only record a leading voice. Between them are strange, diary-like cries, diabolical faces mixed with visions of an ardent yearning for life and love. “The devil dances it with me” (“Der Teufel tanzt es mit mir”) stands on the opening page of the first Scherzo. Beside this are melancholy words of farewell, intimate confessions of love, always in brief, warm words that are written with moving intensity. This score will never be heard.² It was not burned, as Mahler wished,³ but its orchestral completion would place impossible tasks before the best authority on Mahlerian craft. So this draft remains Mahler’s most personal legacy, a stammering confirmation of the developmental line that begins with the last chord of the Eighth.

For the consideration of the Mahlerian oeuvre there only remain two final works, *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth symphony. Mahler described *Das Lied von der Erde* as a “Symphony for tenor and alto (or baritone) voices and orchestra.” It is a cycle of six solo songs. The texts are taken from Bethge’s *Die Chinesische Flöte (The Chinese Flute)*, a free translation of old Chinese poems. As he often did, Mahler made small changes of details, and in the closing song drew two pieces into one.⁴ It is said that he chose the description “symphony,” tormented by presentiments, in order to go around the number nine, which was fateful for all great symphonists after Beethoven, Schubert, and Bruckner. It is possible that such trains of thought had a say with Mahler. But they should not be attributed with decisive significance. Mahler’s concept of the symphony’s nature as a cosmic work of art found a new expression that corresponded to the inner change in his nature. The six pieces were not strung together

arbitrarily as a random sequence of solo songs. They were to him a complete picture of life and the world. Seen from the height of the lonely wanderer who is preparing to take farewell, they were composed out of the consciousness of a connection to the universe. A farewell that penetrates to all hearts and applies to humanity just as much as the grandiose call of love in the Eighth. The personal confession of the individual stands here against the super-personal in this work. The sharpest contrast to the preceding one, it is a complement and reflection in the sense of inner Becoming, perceived in a symphonic and universal way in its ideal and formal conception.

Nevertheless, its purely lyrical character signifies it as a hybrid work, [313] and therefore it is not included in the count of the symphonies. A characteristic trait for Mahler's creative method is repeated: the growth of the symphony from the song. At the beginning of each symphonic cycle stands a song cycle. It provides the essential mood and stylistic character for the budding symphonies. The First Symphony was an extension of the youthful experiences of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, while the Second, Third, and Fourth are rooted in the *Wunderhorn* songs. For the instrumental symphonies, Rückert's poetry, with the *Kindertotenlieder* and the individual songs that sink into the interior of the self, were the prelude. Particularly the *Kindertotenlieder*, although they did not arise as a sequence, appear in their present form as a preliminary study for *Das Lied von der Erde*.⁵ Mahler always thought of orchestral accompaniment in his songs. Not because of external needs or for intended effects. The individual voice, the individual being, was not otherwise conceivable for him than within the complete organic picture of orchestral sound. The piano appeared to him, who never could adapt to the chamber format and the sensitivity for chamber music, only usable within the orchestra.

As an independent accompanying instrument, it was impotent for Mahler. Correspondingly, the piano accompaniments of his songs are expedients, piano reductions without appeal for the player or a life in their own sound.⁶

The songs in *Das Lied von der Erde* differ from Mahler's earlier songs only in their unity and symphonic structure, which was emphasized from the outset. Based on their integration between two large works, they signify, just like the earlier song compositions, the appropriation of a new circle of moods that were intended to be worked out in symphonic creation. The song and the word opened up new poetic associations, clearing the ground for a newly blossoming musical style. Therefore, *Das Lied von der Erde* is not only a personal counterpart to the Eighth, an emotional reaction of the individual being to the choir of humanity. It is not only the mediating bridge between two dissimilar symphonies. It is the foundation, determining the mood and style of the following creative cycle. It signifies for the last, externally incomplete series of Mahler's works the same determination of ideal character and inner direction of the will that the earlier songs did for the symphonies that followed them.

That Mahler himself, regardless of whether consciously or unconsciously, perceived this relationship in such a way is shown by the following works. He had no intention in principle of giving the singing voice, whether choral or solo, the leadership from the Eighth on. He required it either as a conclusion, a final summation as in the Eighth, or to obtain new ground, as in the songs. Beyond that, it had for him only an episodic significance or it was dissolved in the instrumental elements. Correspondingly, the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies are again kept purely instrumental. The sung word is not incorporated into them. Perhaps, however, in the Ninth and, according to the sketches, also in the Tenth, which is excluded from closer consideration here, a

continuation of basic lines can be recognized, in the course of moods as well as in the kind of musical style, that were drawn in *Das Lied von der Erde*. Determined by the inner change in Mahler, they emerge in detail from the world of feelings in the poetry.

[314] The poems chosen by Mahler come from the Chinese literature of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries. They are mostly songs of loneliness. “Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde” (“The Drinking Song of Earth’s Sorrow”), intermixed with wildly demonic tones, “Der Trunkene im Frühling” (“The Drunkard in Spring”) with burlesque, fantastic ones, “Der Einsame im Herbst” (“The Lonely One in Autumn”), based on the expression of unworldly melancholy, and the closing main piece “Der Abschied” (“The Farewell”), breathing shattering tragedy through restrained austerity. In between stand, as contrasts, the graceful idyll “Von der Jugend” (“Of Youth”) and the powerfully blossoming “Von der Schönheit” (“Of Beauty”). Life and longing, carried by the resigned consciousness of the impossibility of fulfillment, is at the root of this poetry. The exotic nature of the language, rhythm, and imagery, and the fragrance of the past that also streams from the tender poems in their sensitive reshaping by Hans Bethge, exalts the quiet charm of these moods, increases the melancholy of the basic feeling.

Mahler made use of these stimuli. The archaic and exotic gave the impulse for melodic formation, treatment of language, rhythm, harmony, and color. Not in the sense of artifice. The music has nothing Chinese about it in the philological sense. The strange and exotic becomes the means for stressing the feeling of loneliness. That Mahler did not strive for an external reproduction of incidental poetic color, but followed the deeply rooted urge to find a musical style, is shown by the Ninth Symphony. Here, what still appeared to be an accidental result of the poetic model in *Das Lied von der Erde* is consciously worked out.⁷ One can call this type of

style the style of dissolution. Dissolution regarding melody, harmony, linearity, shaping of form, and the entire layout. A disintegration, not from weakness, but from the necessity of renewal, of the prophetic compulsion to express while searching for other foundations.⁸ The visionary manifestations of Mahler are driven to an almost painful fervor and ruthlessness of confession. What had still appeared to be temporally conditioned is dropped. The drive toward a spiritual revelation, free of waste and unhindered by convention, alone remains decisive, shrinking back from no austerity, from no nakedness or self-exposure. Requirements of a pleasing, accessible sound are no longer considered. The musical vision places itself before the ear in unmediated originality and primitiveness. Thereby, compositional traditions fall away. Polyphony in the usual sense, consciously cultivated by Mahler since the Fifth, and developed in the Eighth to the utmost freedom and ease in the play of voices, disappears. It is no longer valid as a summation. The lines release themselves from artistic bonds, running free beside one another, swinging out without hindrance.⁹ The voices cut and cross each other. Climaxes no longer lie at the great harmonic concentrations and explosions, but emerge from the autonomy of the melodic impulse of motion. The melodic line loses the tight, clear-cut contour that was previously characteristic of Mahler. The song-like periodic construction falls apart. A new, asymmetrical principle of design comes into play. The smooth, clear line disappears in fantastic, playful ornamentation. The exoticism of the Chinese poetry is the external cause. The thematic structure of the Ninth, in frayed melodic phrases, strung together like a mosaic, avoiding firmly closed connections, shows the [315] basics of the stylistic change. The harmonic principle of design, with its development of the melody out of key relationships and the construction in anticipation of a closing cadence, is eliminated. Horizontal structure becomes authoritative, and the firm rhythmic structure

dissolves into a free sequence of measures and a declamatory presentation. With the individual elements of expression, the formal shape changes. Until now, Mahler had, despite deviations and expansions in detail, held firm to the basic formal types: sonata movement, song, and rondo. Or rather, he finds them his own way with an inner redesign. Now they also disintegrate under the influence of the new stylistic principle. Both outer movements of the Ninth are kept in a rhapsodic, free construction and stand outside the formal scheme that was usual to this point. The apparently more tightly closed middle movements are more accurately ironic parodies of typical constructive principles than new implementations of them. The individual movements of *Das Lied von der Erde*, seemingly like other songs, also distance themselves from usual patterns. Episodic depictions and individual structures show a dependence on the previous type of design. The execution, however, runs unimpeded through conscious ideas of form. The impression of the improvisatory, almost arbitrary, is also predominant in the formal shaping.

The instrumental setting is similar. The orchestra of *Das Lied von der Erde* is handled in a chamber music-like way. In the Ninth also and, as far as the sketch allows inference, in the Tenth, Mahler strives, regardless of occasional increases in strength and sound, for an emphasis of the individual instrumental character, avoiding the total effect of the orchestral mass of sound. The individual voice dominates. The polyphonic style also leads to a layering of voices, heedless of tonal relationships. It has been said by those who are shocked by the acoustic stringency of the Ninth that Mahler himself would have softened and balanced it, had he been granted control through the ear. After all, he had belatedly carried out changes in earlier works, particularly the sweeping re-instrumentation of the Fifth, which was overburdened by heavy brass. It is easy to put forward such assertions, but difficult to disprove them. If one compares the orchestral

treatment with other peculiarities of style in the work, it is apparent that it corresponds to the musical language of the later Mahler. There is no reason, only for the sake of the musical tastes of astonished listeners, to assume a deficiency on Mahler's part. He also did not hear *Das Lied von der Erde*, and yet proved himself a carefully judicious expert of orchestral sound. In addition, it was precisely in these last years when he strengthened his knowledge of the concert orchestra through his conducting activities in America, and he even acknowledged this. It is unjustified and arbitrary to single out the Ninth in detecting contradictions between intention and effect. Of the many oddities in this work, the asceticism of the orchestral sound is only one detail. External objections, though, are the most easily approachable, particularly when the correspondence with other peculiarities of style are disregarded.

The two final works are in a late style. A late style, although Mahler was not yet fifty years old when he turned to it. Full of austere fantasy, like the late style of every great artist, and full of presentiments of the future. The material element of the sound and the rules governing its substance retreat in the face of [316] the spiritual vision of the sound. The rendering instrument sinks more and more down to a slave of the expression, and the ear is an organ subordinate to the transmission; the transcendental tonal conception prevails. While the concept of tonality is not abolished, it is definitely shaken, and ornamental play replaces the compact closure of the appearance. All elements of the previous musical language are tested in their truthfulness and their future validity. It is like a great accounting with what has been. Nothing holds that has not evolved to the need for the greatest increase in intensity. Fantasy, awakened to the consciousness of absolute freedom, wishes to shape the shapeless, to comprehend the incomprehensible. Spirit, rid of the earthly and the material, wishes to captivate the purely spiritual in sonic forms. The

irrational happens, both in the way ideas are shaped and in their sensually perceptible representation. It will require some time to make possible an absolute assessment here, to identify the boundary between idea and ability, to determine to what extent the unpronounceable has really been spoken or even implied.¹⁰ Certainly, however, this late style of Mahler signifies no failing or expiration of strength. The pursuit of the irrational was the deepest aspect of his art. Beyond this elevation of the personal, his late style is the declaration of a prophetic gift. It carries within it the rudiments of modern instrumental music, in both chamber and symphonic styles. In the Eighth, Mahler led the elements of the symphonic monumental style up to their last heightening at that time, had created the most powerful symphonic architecture since Beethoven's Ninth. Now he shatters it. He lets it splinter apart and finds a new way of organizing and continuing it. He looks over his work, and would like to start all over again. "It seems to me as if I had written only a few notes," Beethoven expressed on his deathbed. The feeling that everything before was only a weak beginning, that the true creative life is only beginning now, this clear-sighted view of what stands on the edge of the other world, inspired Mahler's last works. The hereafter, a distant dream in the *Wunderhorn* symphonies, understood in the instrumental symphonies as the experience of creating, of the tragedy of fate, of the symbolism of day and night, and glorified in the Eighth as universal love—this hereafter has now become the property of the artist. He has transformed even himself into a resident of the other world. What he now creates is seen and felt from the perspective of a spirit that already soars upon distant heights.¹¹ The one-time activity of upward aspiration no longer dwells within him, and the love of God and of the universe provides no more impulse, for he himself has entered into it. He only continues to look down in retrospect. This retrospect allows a confession of love

for humanity and for the earth to once more ardently and overwhelmingly swell up in a song cycle. It then allows visions of the future, mixed with caricatures of the past, to rise up in the Ninth. It ends in a work that could no longer take shape because the mouth of the seer fell silent. Thus do the three last creations of Mahler arise, legacies of one who has overcome. Before he gathers himself to the prophetic word of the Ninth, he utters the word of farewell, *Das Lied von der Erde*.¹²

[317] “**Das** Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” after Li-Tai-Po,¹³ 702-763, provides the beginning:

Schon winkt der Wein im gold’nen Pokale,
Doch trinkt noch nicht, erst sing’ ich euch
ein Lied!
Das Lied vom Kummer soll auflachend in
die Seele euch klingen.
Wenn der Kummer naht, liegen wüst die
Gärten der Seele,
Welkt hin und stirbt die Freude, der Gesang.
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.

Herr dieses Hauses!
Dein Keller birgt die Fülle des goldenen Weins!

Hier, diese Laute nenn’ ich mein!
Die Laute schlagen und die Gläser leeren,
Das sind die Dinge, die zusammen passen.
Ein voller Becher Weins zur rechten Zeit
Ist mehr wert, als alle Reiche dieser Erde!

Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod!

Das Firmament blaut ewig und die Erde
Wird lange fest steh’n und aufblüh’n im Lenz.

The wine already beckons in the golden
goblet,
But do not drink yet, for first I will sing you
a song!
The song of grief shall, laughingly, sound
into your souls.
When grief draws close, the gardens of the
soul lie desolate,
Joy and song wither away and die.
Dark is life, is death.

Lord of this house!
Your cellar buries the fullness of the golden
wine!

Here, I shall call this lute my own!
To strike up the lute and to empty the glasses,
Those are the things that belong together.
A full cup of wine at the right time
Is worth more than all the kingdoms of this
earth!

Dark is life, is death!

The firmament is eternally blue, and the earth
Will long stand fixed and bloom up in spring.

Du aber, Mensch, wie lang lebst denn du?
 Nicht hundert Jahre darfst du dich ergötzen
 An all dem morschen Tande dieser Erde!
 Seht dort hinab! Im Mondschein auf den
 Gräbern
 Hockt eine wild-gespenstische Gestalt –
 Ein Aff’ ist’s! Hört ihr, wie sein Heulen
 Hinausgellt in den süßen Duft des Lebens!
 Jetzt nehmt den Wein! Jetzt ist es Zeit,
 Genossen!
 Leert eure gold’nen Becher zu Grund!
 Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod!

But you, man, how long do you live?
 Not even a hundred years may you delight
 In all the rotten trinkets of this earth!
 Look down there! In the moonlight on the
 graves
 Crouches a wild, ghostly form –
 It’s a monkey! Hear how his howling
 Yells out into the sweet fragrance of life!
 Now take the wine! Now it is time,
 comrades!
 Empty your golden cups to the bottom!
 Dark is life, is death!

A minor, Mahler’s tragic key, provides, as in the second movement of the Fifth, in the outer movements and Scherzo of the Sixth, and as later in the Rondo-Burlesque of the Ninth, the basic harmony. It is the key that for Mahler always symbolizes the heaviness and downward pull of earthly things. Yet another symbol returns again, a sequence of notes that pervades the whole work like a motto, such as the motive of a fourth in the First and the harmonic sequence A major–A minor in the Sixth. This time it is a motto rendered in a linear row, the descending sequence A–G–E:



[Example DL-1: A—G—E motto]

Its meaning is not conspicuously emphasized like the chord motive in the Sixth. While the sequence pervades all six songs, it is concealed, made unrecognizable by alterations of the most varied sort, inversion, and retrograde motion. It is like a power that is hardly outwardly recognizable, that creeps in everywhere and, without a violent intervention, always changing

itself, gives the decisive direction for the inner development, or at least a common undertone.¹⁴

In the “Trinklied,” it appears, immediately following [318] the upward striving opening theme in the horns, in the strings, pressing down the ascending direction of the winds, as it were:



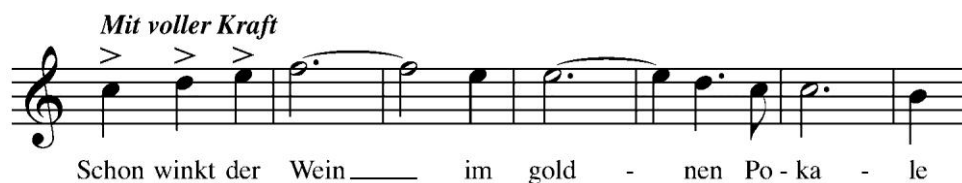
[Example DL-2: horns, mm. 1-9 with upbeat; first violins, mm. 4-9 (doubled by second violins, mm. 5-9, and violas, mm. 5-7)]

Woodwind trills and flutter tongues, hard ripped *pizzicati* of the violins, a high *tremolo* of the cellos, and blaring *fortissimo* muted trumpets give a lurid color, despite the external force. With a wildly explosive continuation of the violin motive, the brief prelude closes:



[Example DL-3: first violins, mm. 12-15, partially doubled by flutes and E-flat clarinet]

“With full strength” (“Mit voller Kraft”), the tenor enters:



[Example DL-4: tenor voice, mm. 16-22]¹⁵

As if mocking, the second line veers over to major and closes in an ironic *cantabile*:

doch trinkt noch nicht _____ erst sing' _____ ich euch ein Lied!

[Example DL-5: tenor voice, mm. 28-33]

It is the “song of grief” (“das Lied vom Kummer”). In the violins, the main motive sounds sharply, and “always powerfully” (“immer machtvoll”), the voice rises up to B-flat:

Das Lied _____ vom Kum - mer soll auf-la-chend in die See - - - - - le euch klin - gen _____

[Example DL-6: first violins, tenor voice, mm. 36-48]

The challenge is given, and the orchestra changes to a quiet D minor. “Dark, tender, but despite the tender sound production always with the most passionate expression” (“Düster, zart, trotz zarter Tongebung stets mit leidenschaftlichstem Ausdruck”), played about by “cajoling” (“schmeichelnd”) instrumental voices, the song begins. It is not a melody in the usual sense, and rises up in free, rhythmically precise melodic declamation to an earnest lament:

düster zart *trotz zarter Tongebung stets mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck*

Wenn der Kummer naht, lie - gen wüst die Gär - ten der See - le
welkt hin und stirbt die Freu - de der Ge - sang.

[Example DL-7: tenor voice, mm. 56-74]

The orchestra gently rises to G major. Falling back into minor, the voice gives a dissipating conclusion, woven with the main motive:

p sehr getragen

dun - kel ist das Le - ben, ist der Tod.

[Example DL-8: tenor voice, mm. 81-89]

It is the refrain of the song, which is constructed in three verses, with the text and music forming the returning dark conclusion of each verse. In the second verse, life calls forth pleasure in wine and music. Similar to the beginning, the prelude is heard, now in G minor without the muted trumpets, heightened in the expression of wild joy by garish woodwind sounds, the main motive hammering in the glockenspiel, intensified by the depression of E to E-flat:

Horns **ff** **Trump.**

[Example DL-9: horns, first violins, mm. 96-102 (with second violins, mm. 97-100); trumpet, m.102]

Herr dieses Hauses!
Dein Keller birgt die Fülle des goldenen Weins!

[319] Similarly as before, the major turn of the voice, then, corresponding to the announcement of the “song of grief,” “Hier, diese Laute nenn’ ich mein.” Songful B-flat major, penetrated by the main motive in the instrumental voices:

Flutes *8va* *p* *ausdrucksv.*

Die Lau - te schla - gen und die Glä - - - ser lee - ren

Viol. *p*

das sind die Din - ge, die zu - sam - men pas - sen.

[Example DL-10: tenor voice, mm. 136-150; flutes and clarinet, mm. 137-144; first violins, mm. 145-150]

The D minor of the first verse from “Wenn der Kummer naht” returns, raised to E-flat minor, the “dark, tender” (“düster, zart”) expression of the voice changed to “glowing” (“glühend”):

Ein voller Becher Weins zur rechten Zeit
Ist mehr wert als alle Reiche dieser Erde!

The brief major postlude of the orchestra is also repeated, now in A-flat major instead of G major. The inner agitation of this verse drives upward, and the epilogue, “Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod,” sounds in A-flat minor instead of G minor, with a liberating close in major and the main

motive “*pianissimo*, but very expressively and with long strokes” (“*pianissimo*, aber sehr ausdrucksvoll und lang gestrichen”) in the violins, which lead the melody.

The third verse is treated most extensively, as the outcome of the two preceding ones.¹⁶ From the juxtaposition of the eternity of divine life and the temporality of human life, there ensues an invitation to empty the cups in consciousness of the transitory nature of pleasure. Intoxication is the defiant self-assertion of the moment set against unavoidable death.

The A-flat-major postlude veers into a darkening F minor. From the muted trumpet sounds the main motive of grief, answered by the English horn with the introductory horn call. A soaring violin melody seeks to songfully reshape the motive of grief:

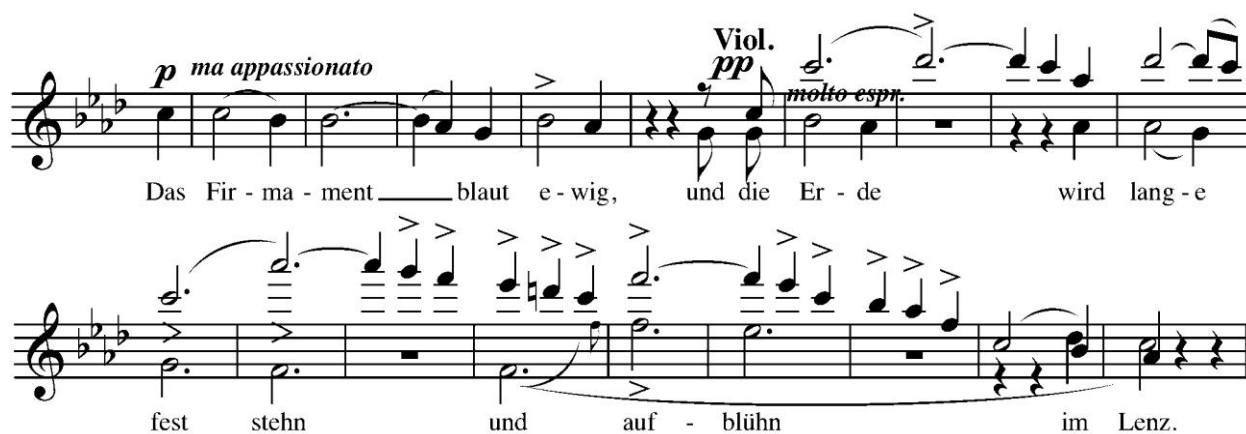
1. Viol. *pp*

Clar. *p* *ben marcato* *mit größtem Ausdruck*

f *ff*

[Example DL-11: first violins, mm. 210-222; clarinet, mm. 214-222]

Driven by the “*ben marcato*” of the clarinet and trumpet, it rises “with the greatest expression” (“*mit größtem Ausdruck*”) to a passionate buildup, then sinks back into a quiet C minor. With a tender anticipation of the later farewell melody, the voice enters:



p ma appassionato
Das Fir - ma - ment blaut e - wig, und die Er - de wird lang - e
Viol. pp molto espr.
fest stehn und auf - blühn im Lenz.

[Example DL-12: tenor voice, mm. 263-281; first violins, mm. 268-281]


Dreamily, the accompanying violin melody continues. “Passionately” (“Leidenschaftlich”), the question bursts out:



f leidenschaftlich
Du a - ber Mensch, wie lang lebst denn du?

[Example DL-13: tenor voice, mm. 295-302]

[320] Crying out in agony, the answer:



ff 2 2 3 Nicht hun - dert Jah - re darfst du dich er - göt - zen an
sf *sempre ff*
all dem mor - schen Tan - de die - ser Er - - - de!

[Example DL-14: tenor voice, mm. 307-325, with some first violin doubling, mm. 307-314]

The wild opening mood breaks through. A minor resounds again, and horns violently thrust their fanfares upward. An eerie vision rises up at this call, clothed in the tones of the grief motive:

The musical score for Example DL-15 consists of four staves. The top staff is for Horns, marked *ff* and *sempre ff*, with the lyrics "Seht dort hin - ab! Im Mond - schein". The second staff is for Tenor voice, marked *ff*, with the lyrics "auf den Grä - bern hockt ei-ne wild ge - spen-sti-sche Ge - stalt". The third staff is for Cellos, marked *sempre ff* and *Vcl. ff gerissen*. The bottom staff is for Glockenspiel, marked *ff*. The music is in a minor key and features a wild, intense mood.

[Example DL-15: horns, mm. 326-339; tenor voice, mm. 328-344; cellos, mm. 339-341; glockenspiel, mm. 341-342]

Ein Aff' ist's! Hört ihr, wie sein Heulen
Hinausgellt in den süßen Duft des Lebens!

In the greatest strength, the motive continues to scream. Over the graves of life, stupidity wails its cacophonous song. The sight calls the instincts of life into frenzy, to an avaricious seizure of the moment in the consciousness of its rapid obliteration without a trace. The song is "wild," now in A major:

ff wild Ge - nos -

Jetzt nehmt den Wein! Jetzt ist es Zeit³
sen! leert Eu-re gold - nen Be - cher zu Grund!

[Example DL-16: tenor voice, mm. 367-381, doubled by violins, mm. 369-372, 376-381; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 373-380]

Major does not hold. Already in the second half, the darkening conclusion sounds into it. In A minor, it gives the song its last ending: “Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.” A short A-minor postlude, briefly summarizing the main motives. A hollow *fortissimo* beat in the depths closes it.

The formal structure of the three-verse construction is clearly discernible in the parallelism of individual lines of verse, the return of the prelude, and the refrain, which rises chromatically from G minor over A-flat minor to A minor. The novelty of the sound formation and the melodic shaping, however, unmistakably emerges at the same time. Periodic structure and tonal symmetry have vanished. In their place comes a chromatically pervaded, free declamatory treatment of the voice. Without lapsing into a reciting presentation, it clings to every irregularity in versification. The word is never interpreted in the conceptual sense, for only the inner emotionality of the poetic idea determines the expression. The orchestral treatment, supported by a few tightly shaped basic motives with sharp, insistent urgency in their intervallic steps, is richly structured and independently intervenes in the vocal presentation. This is no longer an accompaniment, for both parts, the vocal and the instrumental voices, are unified into a truly symphonic whole. Despite freedom in the treatment of the individual instrumental voice,

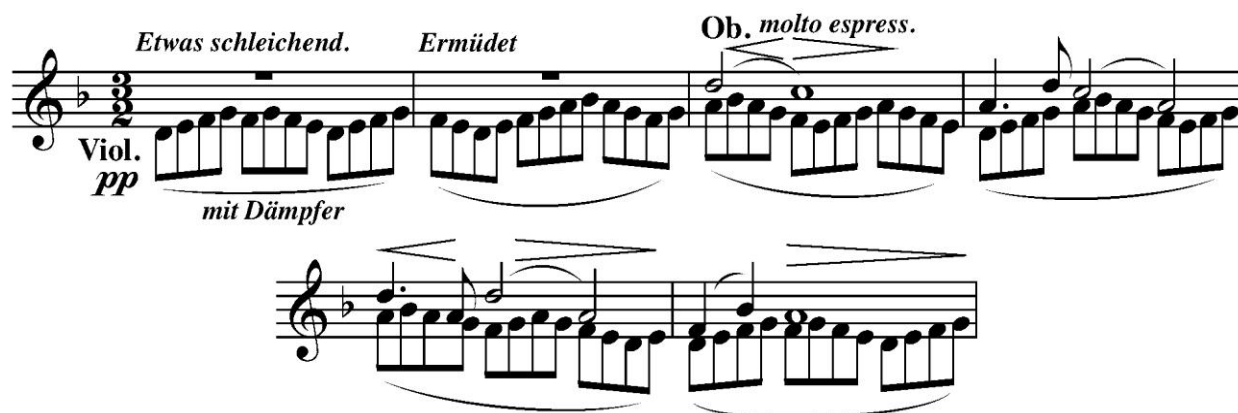
along with soloistic effects that are woven in, the complete orchestral sound predominates, and the piece retains the character of an opening movement.

[321] **The** next two songs are kept more intimate, and also show a more chamber music-like character in their orchestral treatment. The first one to follow is “Der Einsame im Herbst,” after Tschang-Tsi,¹⁷ from around the year 800:

Herbstnebel wallen bläulich überm See;
Vom Reif bezogen stehen alle Gräser;
Man meint, ein Künstler habe Staub von Jade
Über die feinen Blüten ausgestreut.
Der süße Duft der Blumen ist verflogen;
Ein kalter Wind beugt ihre Stengel nieder.
Bald werden die verwelkten, goldnen Blätter
Der Lotosblüten auf dem Wasser zieh'n.
Mein Herz ist müde. Meine kleine Lampe
Erlosch mit Knistern, es gemahnt mich an
den Schlaf.
Ich komm' zu dir, traute Ruhestätte!
Ja, gib mir Ruh', ich hab Erquickung not!
Ich weine viel in meinen Einsamkeiten.
Der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange.
Sonne der Liebe, willst du nie mehr scheinen,
Um meine bittern Tränen mild aufzutrocknen?

Blue autumn mists flow above the sea;
The grass stands covered by hoarfrost;
They say that an artist has strewn dust of jade
Over the delicate blooms.
The sweet scent of the flowers is gone;
A cold wind bows down their stems.
Soon the wilted, golden leaves of the
Lotus blossoms will wander upon the water.
My heart is weary. My little lamp
Went out with a crackle, it reminded me of
sleep.
I come to you, trusted place of rest!
O, give me rest; I am in need of refreshment!
I cry much in my times of loneliness.
The autumn in my heart lasts too long.
Sun of love, will you never more shine,
To gently dry up my bitter tears?

“Somewhat stealthily, fatigued” (“Etwas schleichend, ermüdet”), the D-minor piece begins with interplay of muted first violins and the oboe:



[Example DL-17: first violins, oboe, mm. 1-6]

The main motive sounds at once, transformed into the lonely song of the tenderly lamenting oboe. Ever more broadly, the mournful melody spins itself out, answered by quiet responses from the clarinet, harmonically grounded by horns and clarinets, resonating in the echo of the flute. In a restrained tone, almost without expression, the narrative of the alto voice begins, played about by the clarinet with the oboe melody:

[Example DL-18: alto voice, mm. 25-31; clarinet, mm. 27-28]

“Singing nobly” (“Edel singend”), the horn takes up the oboe song, while flutes and clarinets “warmly” (“warm”) add an epilogue, flowing in melodic thirds:



[Example DL-19: oboes and clarinets, mm. 37-38]

The voice remains in a monotonous, descriptive narrative tone:

Man meint, ein Künstler habe Staub von Jade

But now, swept up by the beauty of the natural phenomena, the song intimately blossoms out, moving to major:



[Example DL-20: alto voice, mm. 42-44, partially doubled by flute 1 and clarinet 1]

[322] Tender woodwind registers take up the major-key turn in chordal filling. A light swelling of expression that then sinks back into the monotony of the beginning. The song sounds “very held back” (“sehr gehalten”) and “shuddering” (“schauernd”):

Der süße Duft der Blumen ist verflogen,
Ein kalter Wind beugt ihre Stengel nieder.

The horn sings, *espressivo*:



p ohne Ausdruck

Mein Herz ist mü-de, Mei-ne klei-ne
Lam-pe er-losch mit Knis-tern, es ge-mahnt mich an den Schlaf.

[Example DL-23: alto voice, mm. 78-87 (partially doubled by first violins, mm. 85-87); first violins, mm. 79-81]

A longing for death presses forward, and the happiness of approaching release becomes conscious. In D major, the melody in thirds obtains words and an “intimate” (“innig”) interpretation:

innig

Ich komm zu dir, trau-te Ru-he stät-te! Ja, gib mir Ruh,
ich hab Er-quick-ung not!

[Example DL-24: alto voice, mm. 92-99 (doubled by clarinet 1, mm. 92-94)]

The dream vision of redemption melts away again, and the creeping violin figures rise up anew. The lamenting melody, begun by the bassoon, sounds from the oboe, and the narration quietly flows along:

Ich weine viel in meinen Einsamkeiten.
Der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange.

The pressure of suppressed feelings suddenly explodes. “With great expression” (“Mit großem Ausdruck”), E-flat major breaks through. Harps rush, the winds sound in broad chords, and violins “passionately” (“leidenschaftlich”) sing the melody in thirds. The fullness of the harmony displaces the previous monotony. In a broad sweep, the voice rises up:

Mit großem Aufschwung Woodw.
f
 Son - ne — der — Lie - - - be, willst du nie mehr schei-nen,
sehr leidenschaftlich
ohne Ausdruck
 um mei-ne bit-tren Trä - nen mild auf-zu - trock-nen?

[Example DL-25: alto voice, mm. 128-137; flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 129-130]

It only flares up briefly, shattering in the fervor of the expression and the vehemence of the excitement. And then it quickly sinks back. E-flat major falls to D minor. “Without expression” (“Ohne Ausdruck”) and dull, as if ossified, are the closing words, in the same [323] intonation as “Mein Herz ist müde” before. *Molto espressivo*, the lamenting tune of the oboe. From horn and bassoon comes an echo, dying away in dark clarinet sounds. The sun shines no longer; love is dead.

Only memory still lives, as longing, as a dream, giving rise to images of what once was: “Von der Jugend” (“Of Youth”), “Von der Schönheit” (“Of Beauty”), and of the blissful drunkenness of intoxication in spring.¹⁸

“Contentedly cheerful” (“Behaglich heiter”) is the song of youth, after Li-Tai-Po, composed by the poet himself as a delicate miniature in the rhythms of speech:

Mitten in dem kleinen Teiche
Steht ein Pavillon aus grünem
Und aus weißem Porzellan.

In the middle of the little pond
Stands a pavilion of green
And white porcelain.

Wie der Rücken eines Tigers
Wölbt die Brücke sich aus Jade
Zu dem Pavillon hinüber.

Like the back of a tiger
The bridge of jade curves
Over to the pavilion.

In dem Häuschen sitzen Freunde,
Schön gekleidet, trinken, plaudern,
Manche schreiben Verse nieder.

In the little house sit friends,
Nicely dressed, drinking, chatting,
Some writing down verses.

Ihre seidnen Ärmel gleiten
Rückwärts, ihre seidnen Mützen
Hocken lustig tief im Nacken.

Their silk sleeves slide
Backward, and their silken caps
Amusingly sit on the backs of their necks.

Auf des kleinen Teiches stiller
Wasserfläche zeigt sich alles
Wunderlich im Spiegelbilde.

Upon the little pond, the still
Surface of the water shows everything
In a wondrous reflection.

Alles auf dem Kopfe stehend
In dem Pavillon aus grünem
Und aus weißem Porzellan.

Everything standing on its head
In the pavilion of green
And white porcelain.

Wie ein Halbmond steht die Brücke,
Umgekehrt der Bogen. Freunde,
Schön gekleidet, trinken, plaudern.

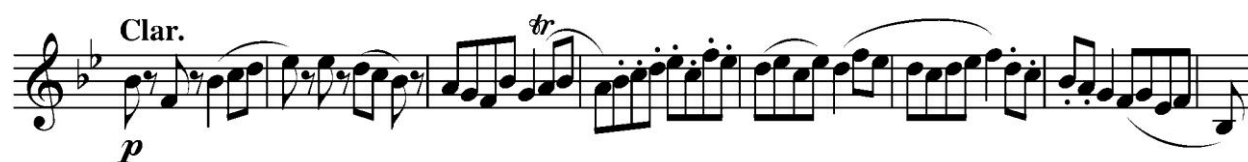
Like a half-moon, the bridge stands
With its arch inverted. Friends,
Nicely dressed, drinking, chatting.

Awakened by soft triangle beats, the piece rises in fantastic charm, unreal, intangible in the skipping grace of its airy appearance. B-flat major provides the harmonic color. An F, struck in a bell-like way from the horn, leads in, first calling in long, reverberating whole notes, then lightly tapping in *staccato* quarter-note rhythms. Above, finely woven voices of the flute and oboe stretch out. They take up the main theme, not in the original, downward directed form of the grief motive, but striving upward in inversion, proclaiming life and serenity:



[Example DL-26: horn, mm. 1-2; flute and oboe, mm. 3-6]

In the higher octave, the melody flows further, and under it a dance tune from the clarinets: [324]



[Example DL-27: clarinets, mm. 6-13]

Only woodwinds and horn play in the introduction. Not until the entry of the tenor voice do the upper strings sound in a bouncing *saltando*. The piccolo runs parallel to the voice and gives it a cheerful highlight:



Mitten in dem kleinen Teiche steht ein Pa-vil-lon aus grünem und aus wei-ßem Por-zel-lan
[Example DL-28: tenor voice, doubled by piccolo, mm. 13-18]

An exotic linguistic image follows, and the main motive is woven in:

Wie der Rü-cken ei - nes Ti - gers wölbt die Brü-cke sich aus Ja - de
zu dem Pa - vil - lon hin - ü - ber.

[Example DL-29: tenor voice, mm. 20-29]

Like a song in the old style—the form becomes the means for archaizing characteristics—a brief wind postlude follows with a repetition of the melody. A sudden change from B-flat to G major. Trumpet and bassoon divide up the melody. Above are delicate woodwind *staccatos*. The triangle rings merrily. Violins and tenor sing a delicate, coaxing tune “gently, but with feeling” (“*zart, aber mit Empfindung*”):

In dem Häus-chen sit-zen Freun - de, schön ge-klei-det, trin - ken, plau - dern,
man - che schrei-ben Ver-se nie - der.

[Example DL-30: tenor voice, mm. 39-47; violins, mm. 39-44]

Ihre seidnen Ärmel gleiten
Rückwärts, ihre seidnen Mützen
Hocken lustig tief im Nacken.

The melody continues to sing tenderly in the solo violin, changing over E major and E minor to G minor, whispering even more secretively:

Ruhiger
pp

Auf des klei-nen, klei-nen Tei-ches stil-ler, stil-ler Was-ser-flä-che —
zeigt sich al-les wun-der-lich im Spie-gel-bil-de.

[Example DL-31: tenor voice, mm. 70-86, doubled by flute 1 and oboe 1, mm. 71-72, 74, piccolo and flute 1, m. 73, oboe 1, mm. 77-80 (with clarinet 1, m. 80)]

A strangely anxious mood, emphasized by the curiously lengthened word repetitions, begins to dawn. There the appearance, here its inverted reflection, one standing the other on its head, both moving and acting the same way. Like a delicate veil, with quiet dissonance, it runs through the stretched-out minor sounds, and the rhythmic tension is relaxed. For a moment it seems as if the whole were about to dissolve into a haze. A powerful attack of the horn on F. B-flat major is obtained, and the fright of the reflective image is overcome.¹⁹ Only the folly of worldly activity, which appears now upright, now inverted, still sticks:

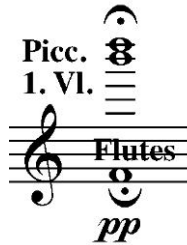
Al-les auf dem Kopfe stehend

[Example DL-32: tenor voice, doubled by bassoons, mm. 100-101]

In dem Pavillon aus grünem
Und aus weißem Porzellan,

[325] Wie ein Halbmond steht die Brücke,
Umgekehrt der Bogen. Freunde
Schön gekleidet, trinken, plaudern.

The music sounds as before, dancing and hopping. The apparitions—what are they? They are the illusion of life, a specter, amusing in the manifestation of its being, which remains the same, even when it is inverted. The music flutters away into a six-four chord, as if into unreality. In the deep register is the F of the flute, almost two and a half octaves above it the high B-flat of the first violins, and a third higher the D of the piccolo. The root is absent.²⁰



[Example DL-33: flute, piccolo, first violins, m. 118]

The dream of youth drifts away, and the dream of beauty and love, again after Li-Tai-Po,
rises up:

Junge Mädchen pflücken Blumen,
Pflücken Lotosblumen an dem Uferrande.
Zwischen Büschen und Blättern sitzen sie,
Sammeln Blüten in den Schoß und rufen
Sich einander Neckereien zu.
Gold'ne Sonne webt um die Gestalten,
Spiegelt sie²¹ im blanken Wasser wider,
Sonne spiegelt ihre schlanken Glieder,
Ihre süßen Augen wider,
Und der Zephyr hebt mit Schmeichelkosen
das Gewebe
Ihrer Ärmel auf, führt den Zauber
Ihrer Wohlgerüche durch die Luft.
O sieh, was tummeln sich für schöne Knaben
Dort an dem Uferrand auf mut'gen Rossen?
Weithin glänzend wie die Sonnenstrahlen;
Schon zwischen dem Geäst der grünen Weiden

Young maidens pluck flowers,
Pluck lotus flowers on the water's edge.
They sit between shrubs and foliage,
Gathering blossoms in their laps, and call
Teasing words to each other.
The golden sun weaves around the figures,
Reflecting them in the bright water,
The sun reflects their slender limbs,
And their sweet eyes,
And the zephyr, with flattering caresses, lifts
the fabric
Of their sleeves, and carries the magic
Of their fragrances through the air.
O see, how the handsome youths romp
There on the water's edge upon brave steeds?
Shining in the distance like rays of the sun;
Between the branches of the green willows

Trabt das jungfrische Volk einher!
 Das Roß des einen wiehert fröhlich auf
 Und scheut und saust dahin,
 Über Blumen, Gräser, wanken hin die Hufe,
 Sie zerstampfen jäh im Sturm die hingesunk'nen
 Blüten,
 Hei! Wie flattern im Taumel seine Mähnen,
 Dampfen heiß die Nüstern!
 Gold'ne Sonne webt um die Gestalten,
 Spiegelt sie im blanken Wasser wider.
 Und die schönste von den Jungfrau'n sendet
 Lange Blicke ihm der Sehnsucht nach.
 Ihre stolze Haltung ist nur Verstellung.
 In dem Funkeln ihrer großen Augen,
 In dem Dunkel ihres heißen Blicks
 Schwingt klagend noch die Erregung ihres
 Herzens nach.

The young, fresh crowd trots along!
 The horse of one of them cheerfully neighs
 And shrinks and speeds away,
 The hooves stagger over flowers and grasses,
 In the storm, headlong, they trample the
 fallen blossoms,
 Ah! How its manes flutter in the frenzy,
 And the nostrils are warm with steam!
 The golden sun weaves around the figures,
 Reflecting them in the bright water.
 And the most beautiful of the maidens sends
 Long looks of longing after him.
 Her proud attitude is only a pretense.
 In the sparkle of her large eyes,
 And in the darkness of her ardent glance
 Still echoes plaintively the excitement of
 her heart.

[326] This song also arises *dolcissimo*: two flutes led in thirds with a gentle trill motive, muted first violins playing about the upward-directed theme, and as a bass voice a bell-like motive of a fourth in the horn:

The musical score for Example DL-34, measures 1-5, is presented in two systems. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system includes staves for Flutes (p, trills), Horn (p, bell-like motive), and Violins (dolcissimo, upward theme). The second system includes staves for Second Violins (pp, upward theme). The Flutes part is marked *Comodo* and *Viol. dolcissimo*. The Horn part is marked *p*. The Violins part is marked *pp*. The Second Violins part is marked *pp*.

[Example DL-34: flutes, horn, first and second violins, mm. 1-5]

With the entry of the alto solo, the introductory motives disappear. A song melody, stretched in a

Woodw.

p >

Jun-ge Mäd-chen pflü-cken Blu - men, __ pflü - cken __ Lo - tos - blu - men __

an __ dem __ U - fer - ran - de. *pp dim*

Mood, recitation, and sound become ever more secretive. Horn and glockenspiel quietly start, woodwinds are silent, and only the piccolo provides flickering lights. The accompaniment falls exclusively to divided violas and to the first violins, soaring high above:

1. Viol. *pp*

Zwischen Bü - schen und Blät - tern sit - zen sie, sam - meln Blü - ten, sam - meln

Blü - ten, in den Schoß und ru - fen sich ein - ander Necke - rei - en zu.

[Example DL-36: alto solo, doubled by top voice of violas, mm. 13-22; first violins, mm. 14-21]

It is a melody whose uninterrupted growth, naïveté, and heartfelt warmth have something of the emotional intimacy of an old German Minnelied. Again the glockenspiel rings, and the introductory motives, this time assigned exclusively to the strings, provide a brief interlude. The voice sings again in the cadence of the opening melody:

Gold'ne Sonne webt um die Gestalten,
Spiegelt sie²² im blanken Wasser wider.

The sun brightens, and G major changes to E major. Life stirs, and impulses to motion entice. In the orchestra are the introductory motives in graceful flute and clarinet voices, while violins, *dolcissimo espressivo*, caress the song:



[Example DL-37: alto voice, violins, mm. 32-35]

Und der Zephir hebt mit Schmeichelkosen das Gewebe
Ihrer Ärmel auf, führt den Zauber
Ihrer Wohlgerüche durch die Luft.

[327] It is an idyll that, in its intangibly tender melodic and tonal fabric, undresses the finely speckled words of the poet of the last remnants of conceptual gravity. Yet beauty does not exist for itself, and it awakens desirability, as well as unconsciously carrying within itself the wish to be desired. E major changes back to G major. The softly enticing postlude continues. Storming string scales, rushing harp *glissandi*, and short horn fanfares herald the awakening of new impulses. The harmony changes in rapid succession with powerful motions from G over D and F-sharp major to E-flat minor, and the tempo becomes animated. Clothed in blaring trumpets and wind trills, and accompanied by percussion, a vigorous C-major march sounds in the full orchestra:



[Example DL-38: first violins, mm. 52-56; second violins, mm. 52-54; flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, mm. 53-56]

It is the accompanying melody of the winds at the beginning of the song, the main motive, alternating in upward and downward motion, the motive of earthly life, formed into the expressions of courageous strength and sensual desire. The voice gives interpretation to the new appearance:



O sieh, was tum-meln sich für schö - ne Kna - ben dort an dem U-fer-rand auf mut - gen Ros - sen,
[Example DL-39: alto voice, mm. 61-65; first violins and cellos, 61-62; flute, m. 64]

Weithin glänzend wie die Sonnenstrahlen.
Schon zwischen dem Geäst der grünen²³ Weiden
Trabt das jungfische Volk einher!

“Quicker” (“Flotter”) and “ever more flowing” (“immer fließender”) presses the march; the desire drives and rises to passionate excitement. In trombones and tuba, the march motive sounds with coarse harshness in C minor, Allegro, as if threatening, and a garish fanfare of muted trumpets shrills into the conclusion of the trombone march:

Trump. with mute (mit Dämpfer)

3 Tbn.

ff

f

sf

[Example DL-40: trombones, tuba, muted trumpets, mm. 80-82]

Chromatically distorted, the march and song motives sound. The voice veers to F major to relate:



Das Roß des ei-nen wie-hert fröh-lich auf, und scheut, und saust da - hin,

[Example DL-41: alto voice, mm. 87-90; violas and cellos, m. 88]

Über Blumen, Gräser, wanken hin die Hufe,
 Sie zerstampfen jäh im Sturm die hingesunk'nen Blüten,²⁴
 Hei! Wie flattern im Tausend seine Mähnen,
 Dampfen heiß die Nüstern!

“Ever more urgently” (“Immer noch drängender”) the march. A sudden change and a breaking off of the march rhythms. B-flat major, Andante, Tempo primo. In the violins, the trill motive of the introduction, in the voice the return of the words and melody of the opening verse, turned to B-flat major:



Gold-ne Son-ne webt um die Ge - stal-ten spie-gelt sie im blan-ken__ Was-ser__ wi - der.

[Example DL-42: alto voice, mm. 97-101, partially doubled by first violins and harp, mm. 98-99]

[328] A quiet slide back to G major. The game of the introduction is renewed, but the voice now sounds changed, longingly pondering the experience:



[Example DL-43: alto voice, mm. 106-114]

Reminiscently, the song of beauty again starts up, but far away are the thoughts of happiness and former serenity without desire:

In dem Funkeln ihrer großen Augen,
 In dem Dunkel ihres heißen Blicks
 Schwingt klagend noch die Erregung ihres Herzens nach.

An echoing lament sounds from the animated intimacy of the song, from the brief epilogue with alternation of major and minor, from the quietly twitching viola sounds. Similar to the song “Von der Jugend,” this image also floats away in the celestial sounds of a six-four chord: three-voice harmonics of the cellos, harps, and three flutes. The foothold in the terrestrial, the root, is absent.²⁵ Youth and beauty dreamily drift away.

Wenn nur ein Traum das Leben ist,
 Warum denn Müh' und Plag'!?
 Ich trinke, bis ich nicht mehr kann,
 Den ganzen lieben Tag!

If life is only a dream,
 Then why all the toil and trouble!?
 I drink until I cannot any more,
 The whole livelong day!

Und wenn ich nicht mehr trinken kann,
 Weil Kehl' und Seele voll,
 So tauml' ich bis zu meiner Tür
 Und schlafe wundervoll.

And when I cannot drink anymore,
 Because my throat and soul are full,
 Then I shall stagger to my door
 And sleep wonderfully.

Was hör' ich beim Erwachen? Horch!
Ein Vogel singt im Baum.
Ich frag' ihn, ob schon Frühling sei,
Mir ist als wie im Traum.

What do I hear when I awake? Hark!
A bird sings in the tree.
I ask him if it is already spring,
I feel as if in a dream.

Der Vogel zwitschert: Ja! Der Lenz
Ist da, sei kommen über Nacht!
Aus tiefstem Schauen lauscht' ich auf,
Der Vogel singt und lacht!

The bird twitters: Yes! Springtime
Is here, is come overnight!
From the deepest vantage point I listen,
The bird sings and laughs!

Ich fülle mir den Becher neu
Und leer' ihn bis zum grund
Und singe, bis der Mond erglänzt
Am schwarzen Firmament!

I fill the cup again
And empty it to the bottom
And sing until the moon shines
Upon the black firmament!

Und wenn ich nicht mehr singen kann,
So schlaf' ich wieder ein.
Was geht mich denn der Frühling an!?
Laßt mich betrunken sein!

And when I cannot sing anymore,
Then I shall fall asleep again.
What does spring have to do with me!?
Let me be drunk!

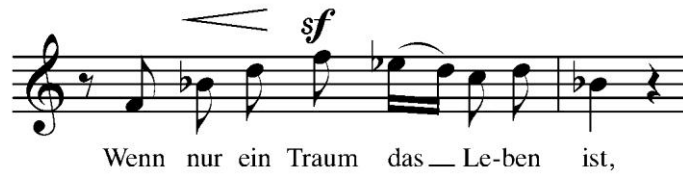
[329] Thus sings after Li-Tai-Po the “Drunkard in Spring” (“Der Trunkene im Frühling”), drunk with the joy of burgeoning life, with the consciousness of a carefree existence of happy enjoyment. A major provides the fundamentally bright sound, and a brilliantly flaring, powerfully struck E of the winds, in “bold, but not too fast” (“keck, aber nicht zu schnell”) Allegro half-measure beats, starts the introduction. The main theme, directed upward in oboes and clarinets, becomes a grace note anticipation that is easily thrown off, but in the horn, it pounds in high-spirited rhythms:

Allegro. Keck, aber nicht zu schnell.

The musical score is written for three parts: Oboes, Horns, and Piccolo. The Oboes part is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It begins with a forte (f) dynamic and features a melodic line with trills (tr) and dynamic markings of sf and p. The Horns part is in bass clef and begins with a forte (f) dynamic, followed by fp and p markings, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Piccolo part is in treble clef and begins with a piano (p) dynamic, playing a melodic line. The tempo and mood are indicated as Allegro and 'Keck, aber nicht zu schnell'.

[Example DL-44: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 1-3; horns 1 and 3, mm. 1-2; piccolo, horns 2 and 4, bassoons, m. 3]

Only three introductory measures as a prelude. Then the voice of the drunkard enters, immediately springing from the main key of A major a half-step higher to B-flat major:



[Example DL-45: tenor voice, mm. 4-5, partially doubled by piccolo, flutes, and clarinets]

Merrily, the motive of life sounds from flutes and oboes, chromatically rising in fresh rhythms:



[Example DL-46: flutes, mm. 6-7; oboe 1, m. 6; piccolo, E-flat clarinet, m. 7]

With it, the voice, self-confidently singing out, boldly skipping over all concerns, as it were, in an arrogant question with a broadly swinging leap of a seventh:



[Example DL-47: tenor voice, mm. 6-8]

The key continuously changes. The motive of life takes shape in now cheerful, now songful rocking sounds:



[Example DL-48: first violins, mm. 8-11]

The voice lurches in powerful pounding rhythms over F major, D major, G major, C minor, and E major, moving toward A major:



Ich trin - ke bis ich nicht mehr kann, den gan-zen lie - ben Tag!
[Example DL-49: tenor voice, mm. 11-15, doubled by violins, mm. 12-14]

Again the prelude. The second verse is essentially patterned after the first:

Und wenn ich nicht mehr trinken kann,
Weil Kehl' und Seele voll,
So tauml' ich bis zu meiner Tür
Und schlafe wundervoll!

The third also begins with the prelude, but soon changes to a tender mood:



Was hör' ____ ich beim Er-wa - chen?
[Example DL-50: tenor voice, mm. 32-34]

The call to life sounds like a bird call from the woodwinds, and the B-flat-major motive of the

voice sounds, transformed, in soft A major:



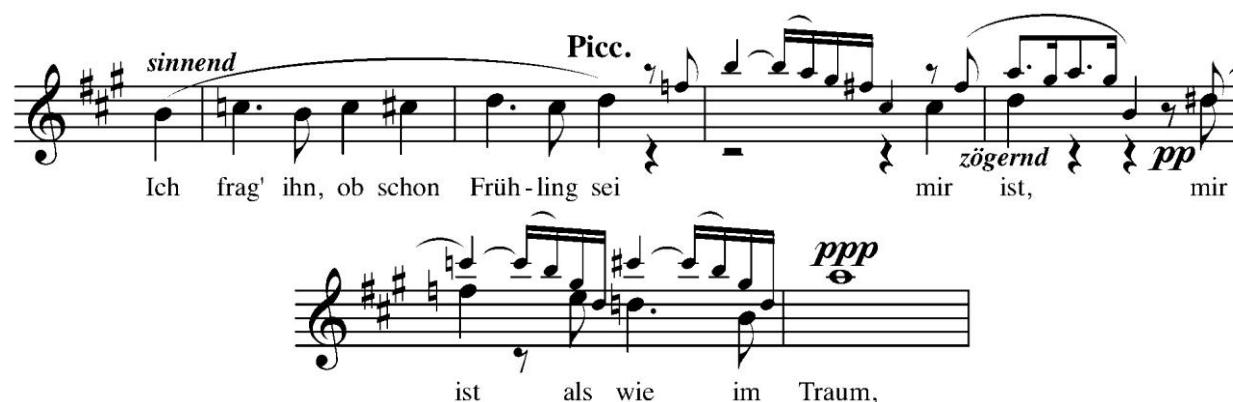
[Example DL-51: tenor voice, oboe 1, mm. 35-37]

“Restrained” (“Zurückhaltend”), it sings *espressivo* from the violin:



[Example DL-52: solo violin, mm. 36-40]

“Musing” (“Sinnend”), chromatically and tenderly rising, “hesitantly” (“zögernd”), then suddenly floating up lightly, the question: [330]



[Example DL-53: tenor voice, mm. 39-45; piccolo, mm. 41-44]

Enticing in the play of the woodwinds, enlivened by triangle beats, the bird call. The B-flat-major melody of the singer is taken up, stripped of its crude character, by violins in lightly

bouncing sounds, to which the voice adds itself:

Viol. $>$ $>$ sf p dolce
 der Vo - gel — zwit - schert; Ja! Ja!

[Example DL-54: tenor voice, solo violin, mm. 47-48]

The cheerful mood is condensed to intimate warmth. In serious D-flat major, animated by chirping woodwind voices, the spring motive blossoms in full song:

$espress.$
 Der Lenz ist da, sei kom-men ü-ber Nacht

[Example DL-55: tenor voice, first violins, mm. 52-54]

Singing broadly, the violins rise up “hesitantly” (“zögernd”), almost solemnly. Similarly as at the question “if it is already spring,” but more deeply meditative, more dreamily prescient, the song is heard:

Picc. pp $espr.$ p pp
 Aus tief-stem Schau - en lauscht' ich auf der Vo - gel singt und lacht! und lacht!

[Example DL-56: tenor voice, mm. 56-63; second violins, bassoon, mm. 58-59; piccolo, mm. 59-61; oboe, mm. 61-62]

The awakening of nature, doubly striking within this piece, is celebrated in the cheerfulness of intoxication. Yet this cheerfulness is not frivolity. It grows from the deep experience of the wonder of spring, a rapturous surrender to its spell.²⁶ It is only a moment of obliviousness. The laughing of spring, as it sounds from the winds, also awakens the dreamer. The melody of longing forms itself into a vigorous drinking song in C major:



[Example DL-57: tenor voice, mm. 64-68]

High spirits again break through:



[Example DL-58: tenor voice, mm. 68-72, with doubling from piccolo and first violins in m. 71]

A major is won, rapture and meditation forgotten. Exultantly, the cheerful opening melody sounds in B-flat major, but then starts immediately with the same words of text for the second time; the melody of spring inspires the singer to a hymnal glorification of drunken pleasure:

Und wenn ich nicht mehr singen kann,
 So schlaf ich wieder ein.
 Was geht mich denn der Frühling an?
 Laßt mich betrunken sein!

A-major jubilation, scales of strings and woodwinds swirling in bacchanalian excitement, blaring trumpets and horns, ringing triangle. The intoxication of spring has grasped the senses, and springtime draws over the earth.

[331] **Youth**, beauty, and spring, the bright images of the third, fourth and fifth pieces, are the joys of the earth. Youth, aped by the reflection without substance, beauty, passing away into longing, and spring, only tangible in drunkenness—comforts of the moment, dream images, melting away into a mist. “Dark is life, is death.” The sun of love shines no longer, the tears remain undried, and the little lamp goes out. Only the trusted place of rest promises refreshment. The course comes to its end. “Farewell” (“Abschied”) bids the command:

Die Sonne scheidet hinter dem Gebirge.
In alle Täler steigt der Abend nieder
Mit seinen Schatten, die voll Kühlung sind.
O sieh! Wie eine Silberbarke schwebt
Der Mond am blauen Himmelssee herauf.
Ich spüre eines feinen Windes Weh’n
Hinter den dunklen Fichten!
Der Bach singt voller Wohllaut
durch das Dunkel.
Die Blumen blassen im Dämmerchein.
Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh’ und Schlaf.
Alle Sehnsucht will nun träumen,
Die müden Menschen geh’n heimwärts,
Um im Schlaf vergeß’nes Glück
Und Jugend neu zu lernen!
Die Vögel hocken still in ihren Zweigen.
Die Welt schläft ein!
Es wehet kühl im Schatten meiner Fichten.
Ich stehe hier und harre meines Freundes;
Ich harre sein zum letzten Lebewohl.
Ich sehne mich, o Freund, an deiner Seite
Die Schönheit dieses Abends zu genießen.

The sun departs behind the mountains.
In all valleys, the evening descends
With its shadows that are full of coolness.
Oh, look! Like a silver barque, the moon
Floats above on the blue sea of heaven.
I feel the blowing of a wispy wind
Behind the dark fir trees!
The brook sings, full of melodious sounds,
through the darkness.
The flowers become pale in the twilight.
The earth breathes full of rest and sleep.
All longing now wants to dream,
The weary people go home
So that, in sleep, forgotten happiness
And youth may be learned again!
The birds sit quietly in their branches.
The world falls asleep!
It blows coolly in the shadow of my fir trees.
I stand here and wait for my friend;
I wait for his last farewell.
I yearn, o friend, at your side
To enjoy the beauty of this evening.

Wo bleibst du? Du läßt mich lang allein!
 Ich wandle auf und nieder mit meiner Laute
 Auf Wegen, die von weichem Grase schwellen.
 O Schönheit! O ewigen Liebens – Lebens –
 trunk'ne Welt!

Er stieg vom Pferd und reichte ihm den
 Trunk
 Des Abschieds dar. Er fragte ihn, wohin
 Er führe und auch, warum es müßte sein.
 Er sprach, seine Stimme war umflort:
 Du, mein Freund,
 Mir war auf dieser Welt das Glück nicht hold!
 Wohin ich geh'? Ich geh', ich wand're in die
 Berge.
 Ich suche Ruhe für mein einsam Herz.
 Ich wandle nach der Heimat! Meiner Stätte.
 Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen.
 Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!
 Die liebe Erde allüberall blüht auf im Lenz
 und grünt
 Auf's neu! Allüberall und ewig blauen licht
 die Fernen!
 Ewig . . ewig . . .

Where are you? You leave me long alone!
 I wander up and down with my lute
 On paths that swell with soft grass.
 O beauty! O world, drunk of eternal love –
 of eternal life!

He dismounted his horse and offered him the
 drink
 Of farewell. He asked him whither
 He was going and also why it had to be.
 He spoke, and his voice was veiled:
 You, my friend,
 Luck was not on my side in this world!
 Where I am going? I go to wander in the
 mountains.
 I seek rest for my lonely heart.
 I travel to my homeland! To my place.
 I will never again roam into the distance.
 My heart is still and waits for its hour!
 The dear earth blooms everywhere in spring
 and becomes green
 Once again! Everywhere and eternally, the
 distant places become bright blue!
 Eternally . . eternally . . .

[332] This closing movement of the work, after Mong-Kao-Jen and Wang-Wei, 8th century, is the main piece of the whole. In scope, it surpasses all the previous songs, whose longest, the introductory “Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde,” only has about half the number of measures of the sixth piece. The lengthening can be partially explained in that Mahler combined two poems, “In Erwartung des Freundes” (“In Expectation of the Friend”) and “Der Abschied des Freundes” (“The Farewell of the Friend”). Apart from the external emphasis of the closing piece, it also stands outside the preceding songs in its substantive significance. As precious and moving as these are, in relation to the “Abschied,” they only have a preparatory effect. The basic rule of Mahlerian symphonic composition shows itself again, the direction toward the Finale, in

which all the preceding movements flow together. Thus, the first five songs place themselves, like a colorful wreath of dark and bright images of life, in a circle formed around the last piece. The announcement of the farewell from life and from the earth also retroactively gives them an interpretation of their individual contents and their juxtaposition.²⁷

Not only in scope and poetic force is the closing song the main piece. It also brings the musical high point, the strongest breakthrough of the force that forms the new style. Details were already noticeable in the preceding songs: freedom in the treatment of diatonicism, emphasis on linear motion and a retreat of harmonic complexes and their effects, the ornamental dissolution of voices, a characteristic use of chromaticism to recolor the expression, independent leading of individual instruments without regard to their simultaneous sound. Particularly in the first two pieces, many of these were to be found, and even earlier in Mahler there were occasionally discernible, but now consciously and heavily emphasized features of a new musical manner of speech. The desire to loosen the firm formal architecture in the old sense, the pursuit of a free rhapsodic construction while maintaining a large unified structure, also appeared. The three middle pieces of youth, beauty, and spring signified an apparent relapse into older stylistic principles, though only an apparent one. Here it was necessary, similarly as in the “*Nachtmusiken*” of the Seventh Symphony, to characterize images of the past musically. The way of creating a style was, despite many archaically imagined features, strongly interspersed with elements of a musical language that flowed from new sources. Now the look back is finished, the procession through the past completed. The artist stands in his present. He keeps to himself, he is at the destination. The changes of life are overcome, and only the individual soul still resounds through the solitude.

The “Abschied” displays a broad-lined architecture. Mahler divides it as if it were in three verses. Each is introduced by a recitative-like narration that leads to a closed songlike section. These song passages, as well as the introductory recitatives, are conceptually related to each other. The execution is varied and intended as a broadly ascending buildup. An extensive orchestral interlude separates the second and third verses and provides preparation for the last transformation. The keys also change. The first recitative is in C minor, the following song in F major. The second verse begins with an abbreviated recitative in A minor and introduces the song in B-flat major. The orchestral [333] intermezzo returns to C minor, likewise the third recitative. The last song resolves C minor into C major.

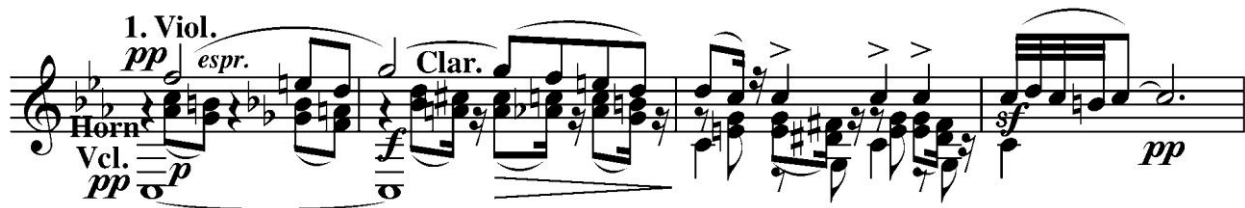
The song begins “heavily” (“schwer”). Resounding in whole measures, a hollow stroke of contra-C in contrabassoon, low horns, harp, and tolling *pizzicato* string basses. Tam-tam beats. Not until the third measure is there a harmonic supplement, E-flat–G, in the horns. Above, an oboe motive is like a shepherd’s pipe:



[Example DL-59: oboe, mm. 3-10]

Violins take up the tune. Out of the harmonic filling voices of the horns, a chromatically sinking motive in thirds is formed. In the basses is the characteristic fourth C–G, similar as in the first

movement of the Second Symphony:



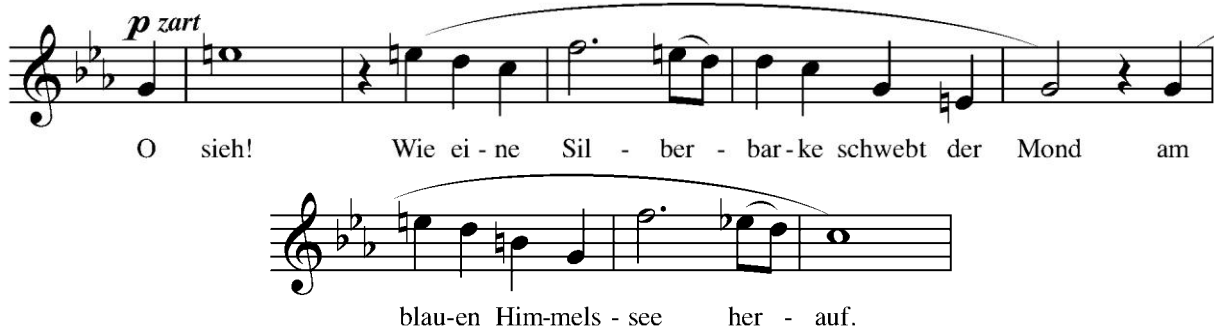
[Example DL-60: first violins, cellos, basses, harps, contrabassoon, mm. 10-13; horns, clarinets, mm. 10-12]

Everything remains a shadowy suggestion. The shepherd tune, taken up by the flute in light motion, concludes in a timid oboe trill. The sinking motive in thirds breaks off uncompleted in the bassoons. The hollow, steady step of a fourth trails off. “In a narrative tone, without expression” (“In erzählendem Ton, ohne Ausdruck”), the alto voice begins:



[Example DL-61: alto voice, mm. 19-26]

The division of the meter is free. In the orchestra, there only sounds the low held C of the cellos and the bird voice of the flute, fading out *morendo*. Then, Tempo primo, a quiet revival: the hollow bass beats on C, the monotonous motive in thirds, the oboe tune. A stirring melodic nature image arises, and C minor dissolves for a few measures into C major:



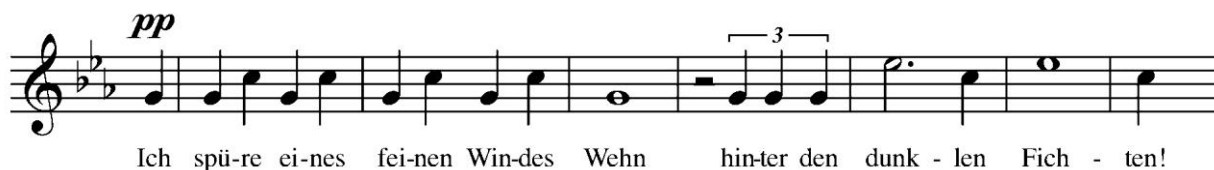
[Example DL-62: alto voice, mm. 31-39]

The melodic and harmonic direction, particularly from the sixth measure on, is reminiscent of the major-key melody from the funeral march of the Fifth Symphony:



[Example DL-63: Fifth Symphony, first movement, flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, cellos, mm. 124-128]²⁸

The briefly blossoming voices die away, and only the motive of a fourth oscillates in steady motion:



[Example DL-64: alto voice, mm. 42-49, doubled by harp 2, mm. 43-45]

Once more the bird voices, a chromatic line that flares up, then fades away in the cellos on F minor. Evening has come. Quiet undulation of the harp and [334] clarinets in F major.

Stretching above, an oboe melody, deeply breathing and singing out, the evening call of the opening with the motive of life woven in:



[Example DL-65: oboe, mm. 57-63]

The peace of nature and its sounds enter into the soul. Without desire, only lovingly grasping the beauty of the surrounding life, the voice sings:

pp *sempre pp*

Der Bach singt ——— vol - ler Wohl - laut ——— durch das Dun - kel.

Die Blu - men blas - sen im Däm - mer - schein.

[Example DL-66: alto voice, mm. 70-80]

Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh' und Schlaf.
 Alle Sehnsucht will nun träumen,
 Die müden Menschen geh'n heimwärts,
 Um im Schlaf vergeß'nes Glück
 Und Jugend neu zu lernen!
 Die Vögel hocken still in ihren Zweigen,
 Die Welt schläft ein!

Downward sliding harp *glissandi* in quadruple *piano* along with a chromatic scale of the oboe, which continues in the bass clarinet and trails off in the bassoon. In the bass clarinet is the evening call, in the bass notes of the harps the oscillating fourth motive of the “blowing of the wispy wind.” All motion expires upon the low A of the string basses. The song of resting nature has died away, and the soul of the solitary one continues to sing. Similarly as before, the still lament begins, again accompanied by the quiet bird call:

pp

Es we-het kühl im Schat-ten mei-ner Fich - ten. Ich ste-he hier und har-re mei-nes
 Freun - des. Ich har-re sein zum letz-ten Le - be - wohl.

[Example DL-67: alto voice, mm. 158-164]

A vision arises. Undulating B-flat major, dark harp sounds, played about by string figures, the mandolin, beginning tenderly. Above in the flutes, first hesitantly, then confidently directed upward, is the motive of life:

Flutes

p

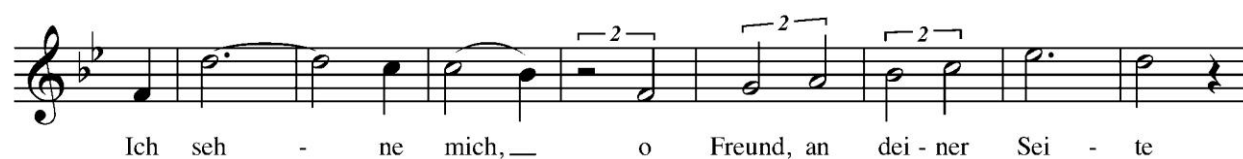
[Example DL-68: flutes, mm. 167-172]

“*Pianissimo*, but with the most intimate feeling” (“*Pianissimo*, aber mit innigster Empfindung”), a violin melody, reminiscent of “Das Firmament blaut ewig und die Erde wird lange feststehn” from the “Trinklied vom Jammer”:



[Example DL-69: first violins, mm. 172-185]

The beauty of the manifestation releases the previously suppressed feelings:



[Example DL-70: alto voice, mm. 198-206]

Die Schönheit dieses Abends zu genießen.
Wo bleibst du? Du läßt mich lang allein!

[335] The theme of life awakens in the song:



[Example DL-71: alto voice, mm. 236-246]

Auf Wegen, die von weichem Grase schwellen.
O Schönheit! O ewigen Liebens – Lebens – trunk'ne Welt!

A hymnal upswing, then an uncompleted, dying conclusion, disintegrating in A minor. *Tremolo*

in the violins, oscillating harp triplets, through which the shepherd call sounds. In the cellos, an echo of the first F-major evening song. Again “heavy” (“schwer”), the C-minor of the opening, the tam-tam beat. The oppressive moods of the introduction gather and collect themselves. The motive in thirds sounds like the accompaniment of a funeral procession. The theme of life appears in a painful distortion of the intervals:



[Example DL-72: bassoon 2, horn 4, trombone 3, solo cello, solo bass, mm. 309-310]

Rising up from the basses, it grabs the upper voices in a passionately growing excitement, swelling to a funeral march:



[Example DL-73: flutes, oboes, horns 1 and 3, mm. 324-332; clarinets, mm. 330-332]

With it, the downward constraining theme in thirds resounds powerfully from the winds. In shatteringly hard, pitiless tones, the vision of death is set up.

The march trails off. “Narrating and with no expression” (“Erzählend und ohne

espressivo”), the voice sings in the inflection of the opening recitative:

p erzählend und ohne Espressivo

Er steig vom Pferd und reichte ihm den Trunk des Ab-schieds dar. Er frag-te ihn, wo-hin er
füh - re und auch wa - rum, wa-rum es muß - te sein.

[Example DL-74: alto voice, mm. 375-381]

No bird call accompanies anymore, only the death knell of the tam-tam over the gloomy emptiness of the contra-C.²⁹ Only after the song fades away do the voices of the lament stir: the funeral march theme, the evening call, the downward thrusting theme in thirds. “Without tone” (“Tonlos”), the voice continues to sing:

Er sprach, seine Stimme war umflort:

As if springing up out of an excess of pain, with a sudden turn to major, a melody of the innermost warmth of feeling, the release of the tormented heart:

sehr weich und ausdrucksvoll

Du, — mein Freund, — mir war — auf die - ser Welt das
Glück nicht — hold! —

[Example DL-75: alto voice, mm. 398-405, doubled by flute, mm. 398-399]

[336] The path is not yet at its end, but it leads over into another land, the land of peace, the land of solitude:

p *sehr ausdrucksvoll*

Wo-hin ich geh? Ich geh, ich wandre in die Ber - ge.

Horn

Ich su - che Ru - he, Ru - he für mein ein - - - sam Herz!

[Example DL-76: alto voice, mm. 410-419; horn 1, mm. 414-415; first violins, mm. 415-417; second violins, mm. 415-416]

Home is not here. The home of the heart is where day no longer awakens from the night, where no more longing besets the heart. The F major of the first song returns again with gently undulating triplets and the “soaring” (“schwebend”) evening song above. “Very tenderly and quietly” (“Sehr zart und leise”) dreams the singing voice:

Viol. *sf* *pp* *schwebend*

sehr zart und leise Ich wan - dle nach der Hei - mat! mei-ner Stät -

te! Ich wer-de nie - mals in die Fer-ne schwei-fen.

[Example DL-77: alto voice, first violins, mm. 432-445]

Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!

The course of the lonely one is complete, and he aspires for rest. As he grasps the staff for the last journey, he turns his view with deepest love back to the earth. What had been illusion for him—youth, beauty, and spring—is still truth because it is always new. The melody of the eternally blue firmament from the “Trinklied vom Jammer” once again returns, C major begins to shimmer, and, played about by harps and strings in ethereal harmonies, the melody of eternity:

Die lie - be Er - de all - ü - ber - all _____ blüht

auf _____ im Lenz _____ und grünt aufs neu! _____

[Example DL-78: alto voice, mm. 459-476]

Allüberall und ewig blauen licht die Fernen!

The earth theme rises up for the last time, free from pain and deception, toward the stars:

Flutes
Oboes

pp *morendo*

[Example DL-79: flutes and oboes, mm. 499-508]

In ever more tender colors it entwines itself in the voices, proclaiming constant blossoming, renewal that cannot be disturbed. Further and further echoes the voice of the lonely one, wandering into the mountains, homeward. Almost expiring, as if from other worlds, is his word

of blessing: “ewig, ewig.” The image floats away. “Completely dying away” (“Gänzlich ersterbend”), the closing harmony. In the depths, C major of the trombones and strings, with the A of oboe and flute placed above it. The earth theme E–G–A, in chordal intertwining, comes to rest upon the mystical foundation of the low C.³⁰

NOTES

- 1 It is curious that Bekker mentions neither the death of Mahler's eldest daughter in 1907 nor the circumstances of his own heart diagnosis, particularly given his access to Alma Mahler. He even goes so far as to say that Mahler was "healthy in body" in 1908. Indeed, Stephen E. Hefling asserts that Alma's own accounts "somewhat exaggerate Mahler's physical and psychological frailty" in this period. See Stephen E. Hefling, *Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 30. Hefling is attempting to correct the later tendency to exaggerate the biographical crises, which is heightened by the so-called "Alma" problem—the fact that she is frequently an unreliable witness. At any rate, Bekker's minimization of the effects that the external circumstances of Mahler's life had on the composition of *Das Lied* and the Ninth (in favor of an "artistic" explanation) is striking given that later critical tendency.
- 2 Or so Bekker very reasonably would have assumed when he was writing. Alma Mahler had given him access to the yet-unpublished draft. The attitudes of Arnold Schoenberg and (initially) Richard Specht, who were in favor of letting it lie, were still prevalent. But Ernst Křenek's realization of the first and third movements was already performed in 1924. This was three years after Bekker published this book. Alma herself approached Křenek about preparing the draft for performance. He would later marry her daughter Anna. In the "Anmerkungen," Bekker states that he refrains from reproducing more of the inscriptions on the manuscript because of their intimately personal nature. Alma, of course, released the manuscript facsimile herself, also in 1924. Bekker's statement here essentially echoes what Specht had said in his 1913 biography *Gustav Mahler* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler), p. 355.
- 3 Bekker bases this assertion and the following one about the feasibility of a completion on Specht, *ibid.* Specht later completely reversed himself and confessed that he had been in error. In a postscript added to the 17th printing of his book in 1925, he asserted that Alma had revealed that Mahler considered the work "complete in draft form." In fact, Specht claims that he was the first to encourage Alma to take a closer look at the score and to reconsider its fate. Despite this, the statement that the work was "complete in draft form" was a wild and misleading oversimplification and a further example of the "Alma" problem.
- 4 Hefling sheds much light on the various stages of the text between the original Chinese and Bethge's paraphrases, or *Nachdichtungen*, including a table comparing progressive versions of the fifth poem "Der Trunkene im Frühling," a literal English translation of the original Chinese, the 1862 French version by Le Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys, the German translation by Hans Heilmann from 1905, and Bethge's 1907 version, for which Heilmann was the primary source (*Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, pp. 36-42). The translation in Hefling's appendix (pp. 120-31) is word for word and indicates Mahler's interpolations into the Bethge text. Donald Mitchell's exhaustive study of *Das Lied von der Erde* in *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* (London: Faber & Faber 1985, rev. edition Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2002), includes several versions of each poem before his discussion of the corresponding song. He always includes Heilmann. French sources are given for Nos. 2-3 (Judith Gauthier, 1867), 4 (Saint-Denys), and the first part of 6 (Saint-Denys). The original Chinese, with literal translation, is given for Nos. 1, 4, 5, and both parts of 6. The sources are explained on pp. 435-43.
- 5 Mitchell precedes his study of *Das Lied von der Erde* with a thorough consideration of all the Rückert songs. Part I of *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* is entitled "Preparing for *Das Lied*: Fünf Lieder nach Rückert/Kindertotenlieder: From Darkness to Light and the Birth of Dichotomy." Hefling challenges the idea of the songs as a "preparation for *Das Lied*" as "historiographically questionable," though he goes on to confirm Mitchell's basic intuition linking the works aesthetically, saying that "their affinities to Mahler's later symphony for voices and orchestra can scarcely be overestimated" (*Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, p. 21).

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- 6 Of course, Mahler's earliest *Wunderhorn* songs were only written with piano accompaniment and never orchestrated by Mahler himself. In the chapter on the Third Symphony (p. 286), he seems to imply that "Ablösung im Sommer" has an orchestral version, which, other than its free transcription in the third movement of the Third Symphony, it does not, at least not one by Mahler. Bekker's main point, of course, is Mahler's orchestral conception of the songs.
 - 7 Bekker's assertions here are somewhat dubious. While it is certainly true that *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony share many stylistic elements, the "Chinese" elements in the music have been analyzed by scholars such as Hefling and Mitchell. Hefling emphasizes the pentatonicism in the work, particularly in the first movement, stating that "pentatonic scales, the most frequent modes of pitch organization in Eastern music, are central to both horizontal and vertical dimensions of *Das Lied*, and nowhere more so than in the opening movement" (*Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, p. 84). Hefling goes on (p. 86) to cite Theodor Adorno, who considered the high register of the tenor voice to be "denatured in the Chinese manner." Adorno also noted the "blurred unison in which identical voices diverge slightly through rhythm" (*Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], p. 150). The "blurred unison" is also known as heterophony, as Hefling notes. Mitchell also discusses Adorno's perception of the "Chinese" dimension of *Das Lied* (*Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 125-27), and includes a full translation of the 1908 essay "Über Heterophonie" by the respected musicologist Guido Adler, Mahler's close friend and early biographer (pp. 624-31). Mitchell even includes a discussion of early recordings of Chinese singing.
 - 8 Terms such as "dissolution" and "disintegration" are common in discussions of Mahler's late style. Constantin Floros echoes Bekker when he states that "the style has been regarded as 'dissolution,' as 'decay,' as having a tendency toward 'disassociation' and 'disintegration'" (*Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker [Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993], p. 241).
 - 9 While Bekker's main point is that traditional polyphony no longer plays a role, he also probably has in mind the free rhythms and lines at the opening of "Der Abschied."
 - 10 Bekker's wording here is a strong echo of the Chorus mysticus at the end of Goethe's *Faust*, Part II, set by Mahler in the immediately preceding Eighth Symphony: "Das Unbeschreibliche / Hier ist's getan" ("The indescribable / Is accomplished here").
 - 11 This is another distinct reflection of a text previously set by Mahler, in this case the final line from the fourth of the *Kindertotenlieder*: "Der Tag ist schön auf jenen Höh'n" ("The day is beautiful upon those heights"). Strikingly, the setting of this particular line is quoted at the very end of the Ninth Symphony. See p. 829, note 31.
 - 12 The entire final passage of this preliminary section, beginning with Bekker's comments on orchestration, contains some of his most original ideas. The discussion of musical thoughts, which can be irrational, and which of them can actually be spoken in the real sonic terms of the orchestra, is a fascinating anticipation of an approach like that of Adorno. The assertion that Mahler, now a master of orchestral sound who had finally completed the definitive re-orchestration of the Fifth, would not have changed anything in either of the late works had he been able to hear them, is another bold pronouncement. Bekker strives to express the unique visionary power of the late works, and his metaphorical telling of it reveals more than the analysis that follows. Such passages must have struck Adorno very strongly. His "musical physiognomy" of Mahler reads much like the preliminary discussions of Bekker's analytical chapters. In other words, Adorno finds more "truth" in these discussions than in the "facts" of an analysis, and thus emphasizes and distills the former, reaching a point that Bekker did not quite attain, yet would have been unachievable had the earlier writer not prepared the ground.

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- 13 Bekker retains Bethge's renderings of the poets' names. "Li Bai" and "Li Po" are the transliterations most commonly seen today. "Li-Tai-Po" is one of several possibilities combining the family name with the "style" or "courtesy" name.
- 14 It is notable that Bekker's rather effusive explication of the motto does not mention its pentatonic implications.
- 15 In a departure from Bekker's usual practice in works with text, where either the entire text is given at the outset and then portions are repeated in examples, or the whole of the text is mixed between examples and the main body, both methods are used in *Das Lied von der Erde*. I have chosen not to repeat the translations in the repeated appearances of the texts.
- 16 Hefling notes that Mahler compressed Bethge's four stanzas into three, and that the third verse of the song includes text from Bethge's third and fourth stanzas. He also treats the instrumental interlude preceding the third verse, and the first part of the verse itself (before "Seht dort hinab!") corresponding to the portion of Bethge's third stanza that he retained) as a development section. From that point, the verse (Bethge's fourth stanza) is seen as a recapitulation of the two "expositions" of the first two verses. See *Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, pp. 82-84. Mitchell's scheme (outlined in *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 176-77) is similar, but he gives the "development section" the status of a third strophe.
- 17 A better transliteration in English would be "Chang-Tsi" or "Zhang Ji." At any rate, this is now known to be an incorrect attribution. The actual poet is thought to be Chien Chi, or Qian Qi, a contemporary from the same region, though this is far from certain. See Hefling, *Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, p. 122.
- 18 Adorno also groups these three songs together, seeing in them a picture of "the missed and lost possibility" of youth, "rescued by the very late Mahler, by contemplating it through the inverted opera glass of childhood, in which it might still have been possible" (*Mahler*, p. 152, translation modified by Hefling in *Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, p. 94).
- 19 Mahler emphasizes the arch-like, reflective form by reversing the last two stanzas from Bethge's original.
- 20 Since this is a six-four chord, Bekker presumably means the root position tonic triad and the expected root in the bass register or position. The actual tonic note is of course present.
- 21 The original Bekker text has "sich" (incorrect) instead of "sie" here.
- 22 This orthography ("sie") is correct, as opposed to the earlier appearance of "sich" in the full text above.
- 23 An error in Bekker has "jungen." "Grünen" in the earlier full text is correct.
- 24 Bekker does not include the apostrophe here in "hingesunk'nen," although it does appear in the earlier presentation of the full text.
- 25 Again, Bekker means the root position tonic triad. Adorno spoke with particular effusiveness about this closing, calling it "a passage the like of which is granted to music only every hundred years." Having stated that the music has an almost Proustian character, he concludes that "in that his idiosyncratically unmistakable, unexchangeable aspect nevertheless became universal, the secret of all, he surpasses all of the music of his time" (*Mahler*, p. 145-46, translation modified by Hefling in *Mahler: "Das Lied von der Erde"*, p. 101).

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- 26 Adorno saw it differently, calling it “the intoxication of self-destruction” and stating that “the drunken man’s ecstasy, imitated by the music, lets in death through the gaps between notes and chords” (*Mahler*, p. 152).
- 27 Hefling quotes the preceding two sentences and refers to Bekker’s statement about the pull towards the finale that is characteristic of the Mahlerian symphony in *Mahler: “Das Lied von der Erde”*, p. 104. It is the only direct citation of Bekker in this extended study. This is a major theme of Bekker’s opening chapter, “The Symphonic Style.” The other large work devoted to *Das Lied*, Mitchell’s *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, makes no direct reference to Bekker.
- 28 See Example 5-8, p. 409.
- 29 According to Hefling, Arthur Neisser, after the work’s premiere, observed that “the ‘friend’ in question is none other than Freund Hain [sic], the spectre of Death who appeared as an ape howling on the gravestones in the first movement” (*Mahler: “Das Lied von der Erde”*, p. 106). The poet is engaging in an interior monologue with death. Bekker’s observations here, at the “friend’s” arrival, support this interpretation. Freund Hein, of course, is known from the Scherzo of the Fourth Symphony as the skeletal leader of the dance of death. Hefling discusses further influences of the Fourth Symphony on pp. 16-18.
- 30 Of the ending of “Der Abschied,” Benjamin Britten stated in a letter to Henry Boys in 1937: “I cannot understand it - it passes over me like a tidal wave - and that matters not a jot either, because it goes on forever, even if it is never performed again - that final chord is printed on the atmosphere” (Quoted in Mitchell, *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, pp. 339-40).

[337]¹ In the summer of 1908, after the return from the first American tour, *Das Lied von der Erde* had emerged. One year later, the Ninth Symphony followed. One could think that Mahler, whose symphonies are generally separated from each other by two years, felt the end drawing near and hastened to finish. *Das Lied von der Erde* was not a conclusion for him, but only a preparation for it, a reorganization of the internal forces. As high as it stands among his creations to that point, almost surpassing even the Eighth in convincing internal power, an unexpected heightening in the expression of a creative life—for him no end was here, rather the beginning of a new creative cycle. The reflection upon the past, the prophetic, distant view of the future, both recorded from the summit that was achieved in the Eighth, this complete account of life was still too subjectively conditioned in *Das Lied von der Erde* to allow Mahler to have been content with it. Just as he viewed himself as only one of the sparks in a sea of light in the cosmos, so he strove as an artist for a generalization of his own experience, for the formation of his personal observations into symbols for natural events. Song, even when it is perceived in a symphonic way, could not be sufficient for this drive. It remained bound to the single individual. The lyrical experience retained an accidental character, even in a large conceptual representation. It was necessary to once again remove the singing voice as a representative of personal conditions, to find, out of the separation from the lyrical experience, the path into the cosmic world of instrumental language. It was necessary to give the things that were obtained by the lyrical preparation a general human interpretation and meaning.

Thus arose, immediately following *Das Lied von der Erde*, a new symphony, the Ninth. It is a curious work. Its outer appearance deviates from all of Mahler's previous symphonies. The formal construction, along with the sonic and thematic layout, shows Mahler upon previous-

ly unexplored paths. A four-movement symphony, but only the number of movements is still reminiscent of the former symphony. Two slow pieces are the framing movements, an Andante with the most grandly extensive layout as the beginning, a long-spun Adagio as the conclusion. Between them stand two lively movements, the Scherzo (“in the tempo of a leisurely ländler” [“im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers”]) and the Rondo “Burlesque.” The key relationships are free. D major begins, C major follows, the Burlesque is in A minor, the Finale in D-flat major. Each movement is only there for its own sake, as it were, and the symphonic unity only results from the complete picture.² This heedless existence for itself alone of each detail is indicative for the style of the work in general. As the voices in the musical counterpoint run independently beside one another, indifferent to the harshness and the clashes of the sounds that come together, such is also the instrumental treatment. The external resources used are less than in the preceding works. Besides four-part flutes, to which the piccolo is added, the woodwinds are only tripled. Four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, and tuba make up the brass choir, while the keyboard instruments, the piano and celesta, are absent. The percussion is limited to two timpanists,³ glockenspiel, and triangle. The treatment of these instruments certainly originates from a different point of view than before. One can indeed say of Mahler’s manner of treating the orchestra that it never “orchestrates” [338] or adapts itself to an abstract compositional sketch. It always arises from the nature of the instrument and corresponds to the symbolic value of its particular tone color. This emphasis on the symbolism of the individual sonic character is now taken to the utmost level. There are no harmonic or dynamic functionaries. Each instrument is spurred on to the greatest mobility, and each lives for itself. If timpani, trumpets, or trombones should sound, the timbral environment in which they find themselves is of the

greatest irrelevance to Mahler. Tone color in the usual sense is no longer present. The entire complex of colors does not operate, but instead their individual values. The linear, horizontal manner of presentation that dominates Mahler's voice leading is also decisive for his instrumental style. The previous constraint of the sonic idea to the totality of the acoustic picture is loosened. A type of perception based on ideas takes the place of sensually materialistic habits of sound perception. The idea no longer adapts itself to the requirements of perceptibility. The perceptible is constrained beneath the idea, and obtains from it new laws. It is a kind of orchestral treatment that before Mahler only Beethoven had similarly applied, for throughout the time following Beethoven, it was forgotten and adapted to the demands of the ear.⁴

Beyond innovations in the nature of sonic thought and perception, beyond a change in the external sequence of movements and key relationships, Mahler in the Ninth attains an elimination of the sonata scheme as the basis of symphonic construction.⁵ It was a natural, but most difficult to realize consequence of the other innovations. The sonata scheme, evolved over the course of two centuries, had proven to be the most fertile, as well as the most flexible formal principle of design. Everyone who had originally been drawn to destroy it had ended by finding and validating it anew. This happened no differently to Mahler himself. From the First Symphony on, he had tried to position himself as an inwardly independent creative nature opposed to being tied to the formal scheme. But, despite all individual freedoms, he had consistently come back to the basic type of the sonata, and had finally given it unqualified confirmation in the first part of the Eighth. The constructive strength, the capability of complication, intensification, and crowning resolution, was elementally present in this scheme. As long as no change at all in the musical presentation of ideas were to ensue, and as long as the

meaning of the theme and the way of establishing contrasts and their development were not to be totally changed, a change in the essence of the form was not possible. Only a type of musical thought and feeling that had been transformed in the innermost way could produce a change in the presentation of the process of this thought and feeling.

For this, Mahler required the work of almost a lifetime. First, he needed to have exhausted all possibilities of the sonata, and to have personally experienced all the changes of its form that were in accordance with his nature, its connection to elements of contrapuntal style, its intensification by means of the fugue, and its expansion through the most extreme accumulation of expressive means. First, he needed to have written the Eighth Symphony, and with it provided the strongest justification of the sonata from the modern mind, before he could acknowledge it as fulfilled and set something new against it out of creative necessity. This new and necessary thing is the Ninth [339] Symphony as a whole, and in particular its first movement as a formal manifestation. Here, all attempts at explanation that are bound to tradition fail. A monumental structure rises up. Neither in the basic lines of the structure, nor in the rules of inner development, nor in the manner of shaping thoughts, does it resemble the old sonata movement or its accompanying forms. Here, a previously unknown, fantastic kind of skill in musical presentation is operating, apparently random and improvisatory, and yet carrying the stamp of inwardly determined legitimacy. Absent is the dualism of themes, their direct comparison, or development in the usual sense. And yet, broadly conceived outlines can be recognized. There are basic thematic characters that expand themselves, combine together, rub against one another, reveal themselves, and conceal themselves again. But this all occurs outside of the usual kind of representation. The closest would be to speak of a song-like character or of through-composed

variations. Yet this identification also only approximately and externally describes the formal style. It does not indicate the internally driving force of development, just as little as the later repetition of the core thematic group and the coda-like conclusion result in a sonata character. A dissolution and new synthesis of previous principles of construction takes place from the will of a spirit that has become internally free. Its meaning and strength of influence on the future is not diminished by the fact that it does not represent a new scheme for common application, nor that Mahler himself was only able to make it succeed a single time.

It must have been a creative stimulus of the deepest kind from which the work originated. A stimulus that becomes explicable by the equally poignant human and artistic tension of *Das Lied von der Erde*, and by the need to allow the lyrical moods that were struck in this piece to conclude uncompromisingly in a large symphonic form. That the Ninth Symphony as a whole and particularly its first movement is a direct continuation of *Das Lied von der Erde* emerges not only from their temporal proximity and from the correspondence of stylistic details. It is unequivocally pronounced by Mahler himself in the thematic relationships. The principal theme of *Das Lied von der Erde*, that interval sequence of third, fifth, and sixth, which, when sounded simultaneously, formed the closing chord of *Das Lied von der Erde*, is in turn the opening and principal motive of the Ninth's first movement.⁶ Its double meaning as a motive of earth's sorrow and of the hope for everlasting life is now lifted up beyond any conceptual level by the orchestral language. One more time is heard the farewell to life, to earth, the wistful ode to the homeland beyond the mountains. Now it is heard no longer as the song of the individual, but as the death song of great nature in its many forms. A world passes away and sings itself into its last slumber. Life releases all the forces from which it sprang and they all flow back into the

infinite universe. It is a death without bitterness, without hate, but not without a struggle, interrupted by the violent convulsions of the last, inwardly conflicted powers of the will. At the end, however, is the oneness of will and fate, a conscious expiration of the one who has become fully mature and complete. An apotheosis of death that begins to sound in D major, the very key in which Mahler once had glorified the triumph of life in the Finale of the First Symphony, divine love in the Finale of the Third, [340] creative strength in the Finale of the Fifth. Life, love, and creative strength are now seen by the one whose inner self already stands on the other side, as if from a higher world, looking back. Death appears to him as the fulfillment of all that which was once offered as the objective of life's struggles and desires. Life becomes death and death becomes life.⁷ Only from such a standpoint can this work be understood. Only out of such an exchange of concepts could Mahler find the ability and strength for the act of creating a style within the musical composition or the intellectual basis for this grandiose epilogue. The hot flame of life in the Eighth had consumed the mortality within him, and he had no more part in earthly things. Only the indestructible spirit still lived and sang the hymn that glorified death as the perfecter, freed from all the burdens of material limitation. Once before, this idea had become creative within him when he wrote the *Kindertotenlieder*. Then it was the young and unrevealed life, now it is the mature man to whom the song of a grand death rings out. It is a grueling song, not actually created for the ears of this world. It tells of the last things, and Mahler himself died from it.⁸ His yearning for truth had arrived at its objective. He had seen God in the last revelation that the human eye is given to behold: God is death. "What Death Tells Me" is the unwritten heading of the Ninth Symphony.⁹

Quiet suspended pedal points on A, given to cellos and horn in relaxed rhythms, provide a brief introduction. In the harp, the fundamental theme is struck like the ringing of bells:



[Example 9-1: harp, mm. 3-4]

In a stopped horn sounds a syncopated call that briefly strives upward and quickly sinks back:



[Example 9-2: horn 2, mm. 4-5]¹⁰

In an echo, it quietly lingers. A dark *tremolo* is played by violas on the notes of the fundamental motive. In the second violins, the elegiac main theme slowly dawns, accompanied by a countersubject in the horn. At first hardly recognizable as a thematic shape, it draws breath from measure to measure, as it were, as if only gradually becoming perceptible as an appearance out of the subconscious.¹¹ It is not actually a melody, but only the basic spiritual outline of such, with inner accents of feeling that are strung together, springing from nature, without external connection or fluidity. Traversed by the intervals of the fundamental motive, it rests upon the somber bell sounds of the harp and *pizzicato* bass:

[Example 9-3: second violins and horn, mm. 6-14]

Mahler prescribes bowing for the violins. He wants the upbeat, the fundamental motive, to be emphasized by the heavy downbow. In the horn, the motive continues to sound dreamily. First violins take up the song. Over the quiet *tremolo* and *pizzicato* accompaniment of divided violas, sighing [341] counter melodies in second violins and cellos, bass *pizzicati*, and held horn tones, it sounds like a cradle song or lullaby:

[Example 9-4: first and second violins, mm. 17-25]

Major dies away and the minor counterpart quietly awakens. In the horn is the beginning call of the theme, lamenting:



[Example 9-5: 1st horn, mm. 27-28]

In the strings, an agitated motion. In a passionate, upward-reaching violin melody, it obtains a thematic shape:



[Example 9-6: first violins, mm. 29-36]¹²

The agitation grows as thematic calls sound into it. In a large arch, the line stretches to a high A and seeks to assert it. A chromatic wind motive roars up in imperious accented rhythms:

1. Viol.

ff sf ff sf

Horns

[Example 9-7: first violins (with some second violin doubling), mm. 38-42, horns, mm. 40-44]

The trumpets take it up in an intensified form:

Trump.

ff cresc. sf

[Example 9-8: trumpets, mm. 44-46]

Lamentation and passion are rejected. With majestic sweep, the major-key melody returns. It is no longer a gentle lullaby, but a solemn hymn. The sounds of the harp broadly undulate, and the fundamental motive, in forceful, torn *pizzicatti* and rushing *tremolos*, is supported by horns and harps. Above it, the hymnal intensification of the melody is entwined in first and second violins:



[Example 9-9: first and second violins, mm. 46-54]

A B-flat-major interlude brings relaxation and awakens the memory: reminiscent echoes of the Ländler-like Trio melody from the Death Dance-Scherzo of the Fourth Symphony:

[Example 9-10: second violins, mm. 56-64; flutes, mm. 58-61; first violins, mm. 62-64]

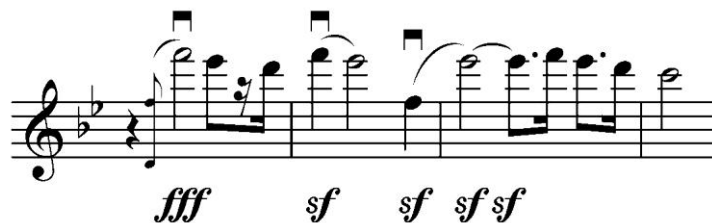
Once more the D-major melody, radiating more quietly and calmly than at the last outburst, and then quietly extinguished. In stopped horns, the opening call fades away. [342] “Somewhat brisker” (“Etwas frischer”), the passionate theme of the violins enters for the second time.

Resting upon B-flat-major harmonies, it is immediately led further by the winds with a strong sweep into the imperious chromatic motive:



[Example 9-11: first violins, oboes, clarinets, trumpets, mm. 81-84 (oboes and clarinets only through first half of m. 84; trumpet sixteenth G at the end is a mistake and should be B-flat)]

This now leads. With its solidly hammering rhythm it provides a prevailing tone of hard, thrusting energy. The motives build upon one another, and the voices intertwine in wide-spanning arches. Added to the passionate theme and the chromatic wind call is the syncopated fourth motive of the beginning, now with an expression of decisive strength. In the triple *forte* of two-voice violins and high winds sounds out a new thematic metamorphosis:



[Example 9-12: first violins, flutes, E-flat clarinet, mm. 92-95]

In building agitation, the tempo presses to Allegro, the strings drive upward in growing intensity, and the wind motive sounds out *fortissimo*. A mighty E-flat-minor *glissando* in both harps, and chromatically plunging triplets from trombones and horns. A violently thrusting, fanfare-like

transformation of the fundamental motive in the brass, with harsh triplets and shrill trills on the second beat:



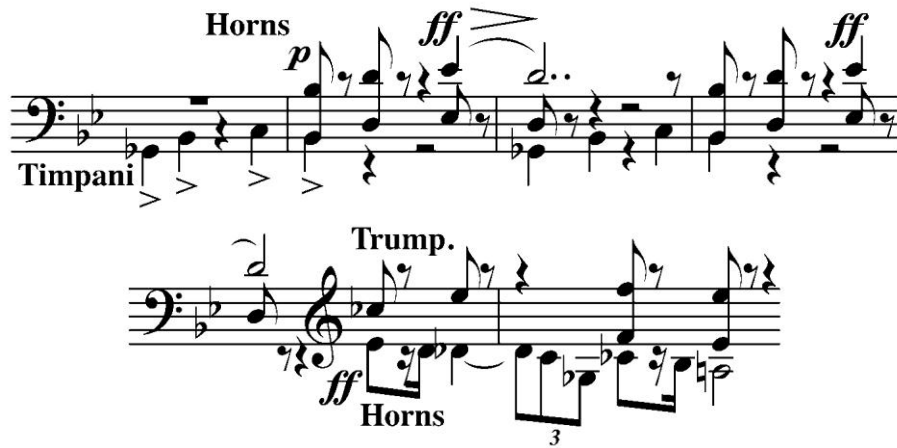
[Example 9-13: horns 1 and 2 (with doubling from 1st trombone and violas), mm. 102-103]

The fanfare continues to sound in all winds, moving away from E-flat minor and brightening for one measure in heroic E-flat major, then fading away in G minor.¹³ The strings have died away on a high B-flat. Everything is silent except for a timpani roll and string basses on B-flat. In the horns, the syncopated introductory rhythm haltingly starts:



[Example 9-14: horns, trombones, tuba, mm. 108-110]

Muted trombones and tuba enter with low, held G-flat and B-flat. In the timpani, the fundamental motive is added to the roll of the bass drum, answered by horns and further led into the chromatic triplet theme:



[Example 9-15: timpani, horns, trumpets, mm. 111-116]

The thematic song of low muted strings, oboe, and English horn sounds plaintively:



[Example 9-16: oboes, English horn, muted violas and cellos, mm. 116-118]

Fortissimo, the introductory call in trombones and horns rejects it. The roll of the bass drum and timpani continues. The fundamental motive calls from basses and first timpani, and in low clarinet sounds, the passionate theme briefly jerks upward. Violins take up the lament, which is again repulsed by the wind motive. In muted trombones, the beginning of the opening song with an F that creates a dissonance with the F-sharp of the horns:

Viol. *f* < > *espr.* *ff* *dim.* *ff*

Horns *ff* *sempre ff*

Muted Tbn. *p* *ff* *p*

[Example 9-17: first violins, mm. 123-127; horns, mm. 125-129; trombones, mm. 127-129]

[343] Tam-tam beats. In the cellos, the songful death dance melody of the B-flat-major interlude struggles upward, “suddenly very moderately and held back” (“plötzlich sehr mäßig und zurückhaltend”), and from the flute sounds the upbeat call of the major-key theme. Muted horns take it up, and the fundamental motive rings softly from the harp and is heard in cello *tremolos*. In a timidly ascending chromatic line, the violins slowly direct themselves upward:

1 Viol. *pp*

2. Viol. *pp* *p*

[Example 9-18: first and second violins, mm. 142-147]

Very quietly, D major springs up again, the melody “sung tenderly, but very prominently” (“*zart gesungen, aber sehr hervortretend*”) by the horn, the violin voice dissolved into arabesques.¹⁴

The B-flat-major song follows directly, pervaded by motives of the main melody. Into it sound fanfares of muted trumpets and, becoming stronger, they thunder from the timpani:



[Example 9-19: timpani, mm. 172-173]

A sudden change to *Allegro risoluto*, “with fury” (“*mit Wut*”). Then battle calls of woodwinds and stopped horns:



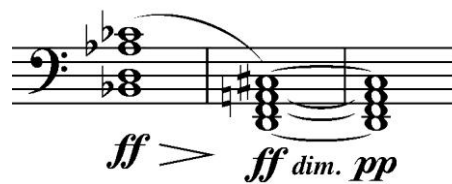
[Example 9-20: flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns, mm. 174-175]

In the basses, the chromatic motive leads over to the passionate theme. With great sweep, the major melody unfolds in horns, strings, and woodwinds:



[Example 9-21: horns, mm. 184-187; violas and cellos, mm. 185-186; violins, mm. 186-187]

Driven by the chromatic triplet motive in the heavy brass and basses, the buildup culminates in a glaring chordal dissonance. From tuba, trombones, horns, and low woodwinds there sounds, with sharp, biting *fortissimo*, the broadly held seventh chord D–F–A–C-sharp:



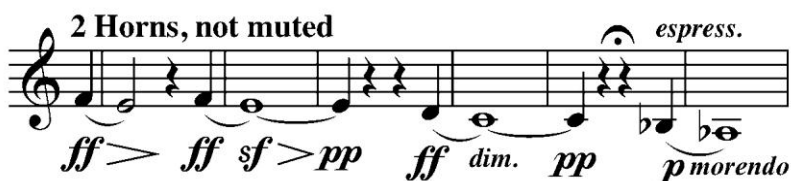
[Example 9-22: bass clarinet, bassoons and contrabassoon, horns, trombones, tuba, mm. 201-203]

The upper voices abruptly crash down. Out of the elements of the gloomy harmony, however, the passionate theme rises up with reinforced strength, turned to B-flat minor, encompassing the whole string section, divided into doubled groups of voices, in a stormy upward motion, *molto appassionato*:



[Example 9-23: first violins, mm. 211-216]

At first, the strings lead, but heavy chordal accents in the winds and short tonal stresses increase the force of the mighty motion. Growing to “the greatest strength” (“mit höchster Kraft”), it veers from B-flat minor into the dominant seventh chord on A. Prepared and supported by the triplet motive in the winds, the opening of the main theme roars, judgment-like, from the horns, demanding peace, commanding rest:



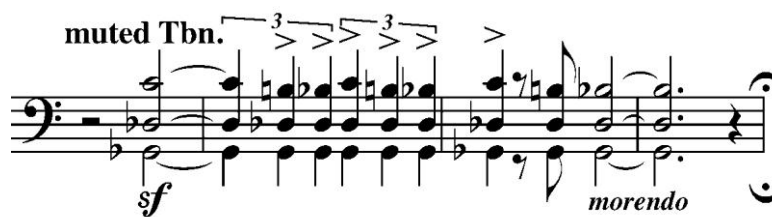
[Example 9-24: horns 1 and 2, mm. 237-243]

[344] As if bent down, the voices of passion sink, becoming very slow in just a few measures, disappearing into the depths. Gravely, the chromatic wind motive closes in trombones and tuba:



[Example 9-25: trombones and tuba, mm. 243-246; horns, mm. 245-246]

In intensifying minor-third sounds, the opening of the theme in horns and low clarinets.¹⁵ The passionate motive quietly flits by in the violins. Once more, turned to G-flat major, the trombone call:



[Example 9-26: trombones and tuba, mm. 250-253]

Fermata. “Shadowy” (“Schattenhaft”) ascending *tremolos*. In triple *piano*, the violins strive chromatically upward. Plaintively, and in E-flat minor, the horn call:



[Example 9-27: horns, mm. 256-257]

“Gradually gaining more tone” (“Allmählich an Ton gewinnend”), the string sounds become stronger. As before, yet more delicately, D major slowly shines through. Two horns,

“softly blown” (“weich geblasen”), sing the melody in parallel thirds. Violins soar over them in the interplay of two solo voices, while flutes and the remaining first violins add freely paraphrasing secondary voices:

[Example 9-28: horns (with upbeat), first violins (solo voices only, mm. 269-270), mm. 267-274]

The melody of the former battle song follows in a slight intensification, “somewhat more flowing” (“etwas fließender”):

[Example 9-29: first violins, mm. 279-281; second violins, m. 282; flutes, oboes, English horn, clarinets, mm. 279-282]

A vigorous B-major upswing, “quasi Allegro.” The chromatic motive in trumpets, enthusiastically continuing to sing in strings, leads to the last, most extreme buildup, sounding with “greatest strength” (“höchste Kraft”) in the full splendor of the strings, woodwinds, and

trumpet over a broadly deployed *stringendo* pedal point on F-sharp. “With the greatest power” (“Mit höchster Gewalt”), the countermelody and the trombone call, to the roll of the bass drum and a broadly resounding tam-tam beat:

Mit höchster Gewalt

Tbn. Tuba
Schalltr. auf Basses
Basses

[Example 9-30: trombones, timpani, basses (with some doubling from cellos and contrabassoon), mm. 314-322]

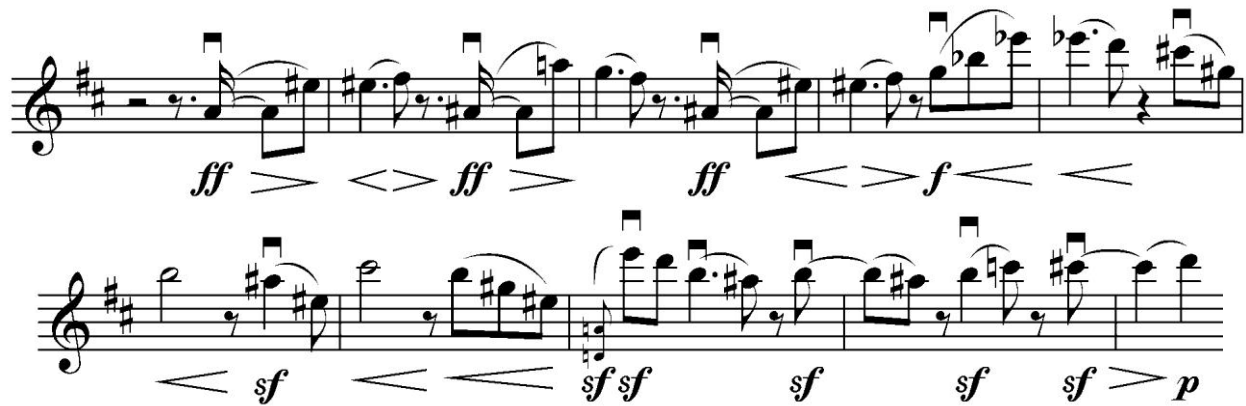
“Like a weighty procession” (“Wie ein schwerer Kondukt”), it advances. In the timpani is the mournful knell of the fundamental motive, in the woodwinds the painfully distorted song theme, interrupted by trumpet fanfares:

Wie ein schwerer Kondukt

Woodw. Violas
Trp.
Timpani

[Example 9-31: timpani, flutes, oboes, violas, mm. 326-329; trumpets, mm. 327-328; clarinets, bassoons, basses, mm. 328-329]

The march leads to D major, and horns sing the melody.¹⁶ The bell ringing, and with it the entire sound, grows and swells to a tremendous, urgent lament of death. In chromatic paraphrases, the upbeat always very heavily emphasized, violins and woodwinds accompany the melody: [345]



[Example 9-32: first violins (with partial doubling from flutes and second violins), mm. 356-365]

Further onward, the song presses through, reaching over to B-flat major in the entwined upper voices:



[Example 9-33: second violins, mm. 365-367; violas and cellos, mm. 365-366; first violins, mm. 366-367 (flutes, oboes, and clarinets doubling violin parts; English horn doubling low strings)]

Very briefly, only for four measures, the passionate melody, answered by the chromatic wind motive. “Suddenly significantly slower (*lento*) and quietly” (“Plötzlich bedeutend langsamer [*lento*] und leise”), a “*Misterioso*” passage. The full sound of the orchestra breaks off, and the

voices flutter away. Over heavy bass sounds that crash to the depths, it sounds from woodwinds like bird calls.¹⁷ Once more the minor-key theme briefly and passionately flares up in the strings, and once more the wind theme rejects it. Then a last, resolving D major. Upon upward-striving harp sounds, “very softly emerging” (“sehr weich hervortretend”), is the horn song, finishing with the wind motive, now stripped of its hardness, closed off by the longing call of the clarinet:



[Example 9-34: horns 1 and 2, mm. 408-416; horn 3, mm. 413-416; E-flat clarinet, mm. 413-416]

“Very hesitantly” (“Sehr zögernd”), the voices dissolve. Only the soft register of the winds and harp are heard. “Floating” (“Schwebend”), the flute strives to the heights, and then slowly sinks down again. “*Espressivo*, cajoling” (“schmeichelnd”), the major-key melody is briefly suggested in “gently emerging” (“zart hervortretend”) voices of oboe, clarinets, horns, and violins.

“Hesitantly” (“Zögernd”), as if melting into delicate, wispy clouds of sound, the song trails off, *dolcissimo*. Ever more quietly, the ringing harp sounds. A silvery harmonic on the cellos, along with piccolo, provides the final note. It is finished. From earthly restrictions of struggles and passions, the soul has returned home, to freedom.

As a friend and redeemer, as a gently cradling comforter, death appeared in the first movement. As a demon, it dominates the middle movements, the Scherzo and Rondo. Not as it once had in the Fourth Symphony, as the medieval, masked “Freund Hein” with his fiddle of death. This time, as the summoner of dark forces and shadows, which dance their rounds at his bidding, now in grotesque leaps, now in wildly fantastic whirls. The dance images of earlier works return, similar sounds, related rhythms, partly elemental and crude, partly drawn into the grotesque. But all of this is flown over by a breath of gruesome irony, as if beheld from the other side, distorted mirror images of former sensual joys. Harsh parodies of life, obtained by caustic mockery, frightening where they should have been amusing. Dances, in which fresh limbs do not swing, but in which bones rattle. An incredible demonic rhythm moves in circles and controls the mood.¹⁸

“Somewhat clumsily and very coarse, in the tempo of a leisurely Ländler” (“Etwas täppisch und sehr derb, im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers”), [346] the second movement begins. An uncouth bass figure stumbles out, and shrill clarinets answer as if in an ironically curtsying motion:¹⁹

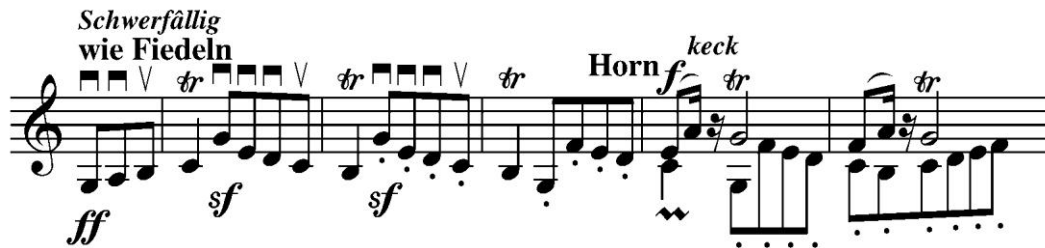
Im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers
Etwas täppisch und sehr derb.
Bassoon
Violas.
Clarinet

The image shows a musical score snippet. On the left, the Bassoon and Violas parts are written in a bass clef, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. On the right, the Clarinet part is written in a treble clef, featuring a more melodic, curtsying-like pattern with accents and dynamic markings of forte (*f*) and sforzando (*sf*).

[Example 9-35: bassoons and violas, mm. 1-2 (with upbeat); clarinets and bass clarinet, mm. 2-4]

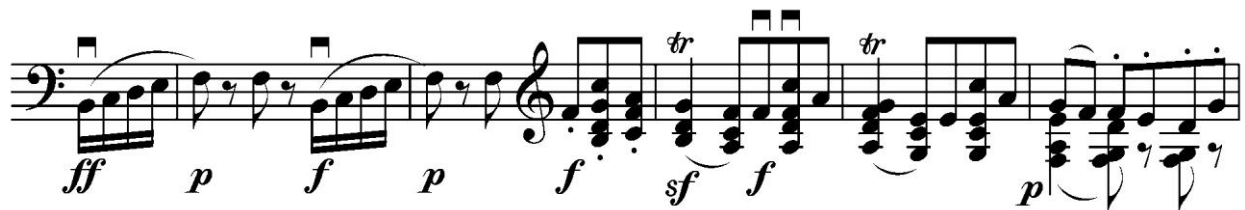
Once more the awkward invitation, and once again the answer, now from horns. The pairs stand, and the dance commences. “Heavily, like fiddles” (“Schwerfällig, wie Fiedeln”), the second

violins stamp, the basses solidly heave in full measures, and the horn mixes in a “cheekily” (“keck”) trilling secondary voice:



[Example 9-36: second violins, mm. 9-14; horn, mm. 13-14]

The tune does not come to a conclusion. The saucy woodwind answer alone sounds further, repeated by horns as if in an echo. For the second time, the dance begins, this time stamping more crudely than before. Oboes and clarinets are heard together with the strings, of which the first violins are still tacit. Again after a few bars, there is a feeble sinking back of the dance theme and the continuing sound of the wind answer with its echo sounds, skipping along alone as if mocking. Impetuously, the bass theme rants on a half-step lower, searching for a new way out with the turn to F major. Again the same wind answer:

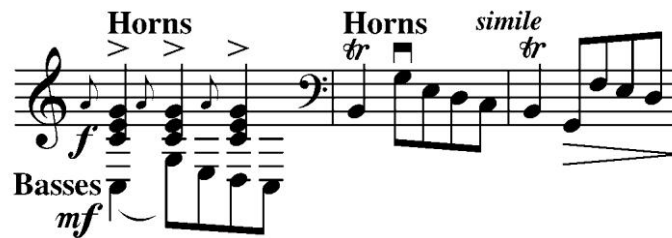


[Example 9-37: top voice of cellos, mm. 32-34; second violins, oboes, and horns, mm. 34-37]

Everything remains in the elemental realm, ungainly and rugged, the demonic grotesque.

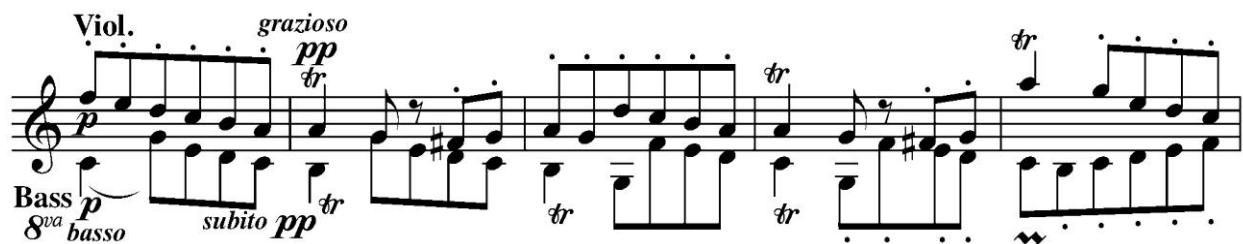
Broadly resounding horn calls now are heard as accompanying music: the closing six-five chord

of *Das Lied von der Erde* in a dully distorted augmentation, and under it, blundering like a bear, is the dance tune of the basses:



[Example 9-38: cellos and basses, mm. 40-42; horns, m. 40 &c. *simile*]

The horns continue to yelp and edge downward chromatically. The image obtains more refined features as the basses leap in comic agility and the first violins add a delicate upper voice, *grazioso*:



[Example 9-39: first violins and string basses, mm. 58-62]

The voices spin themselves into alternating embraces and quickly changing dynamic contrasts. Crashing and dancing motives, the coarse and the graceful, seek and flee from one another, leading a delicately measured round dance, skipping slowly away, and suddenly disappearing. Only the horn echo lingers. The bass motive again stumbles in, this time not in the leisurely ponderous opening rhythm, but lightly oscillating. Turned to E major, it leads into a waltz-like *Poco più mosso*, *subito*. A vehement and vigorous theme sounds in the string section, more an incessantly driving rhythm than a melody.²⁰ The fundamental motive is woven into it:



[Example 9-40: first violins (without multiple-stop harmonies), mm. 90-96]

[347] Muted horns and shrieking woodwind voices sound into it. The string quintet leads at first, and then trombones are heard, accompanied by timpani after the beat with the parodied fundamental motive:



[Example 9-41: trombones and timpani, mm. 123-124; first violins, mm. 125-127; second violins and violas, mm. 125-126]

The dance intensifies. In chromatic exchanges, the harmonies push chaotically into one another.

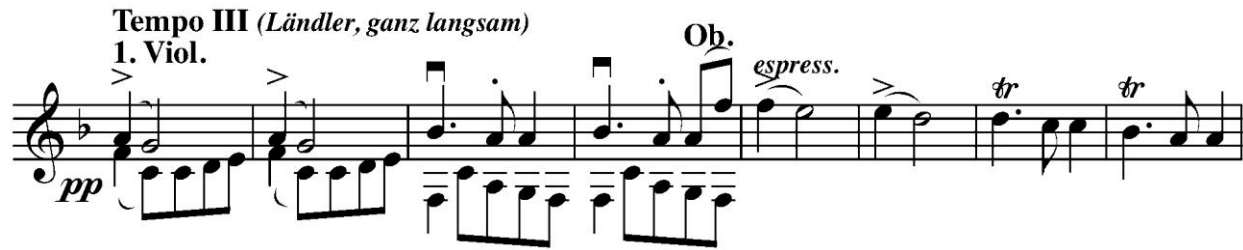
A turn to E-flat major gives trombones the lead with a wildly jubilant theme:²¹



[Example 9-42: trombones, tuba, bass clarinet, string basses, mm. 147-151; bassoons, horns, cellos, m. 151; first violins, mm. 152-155]

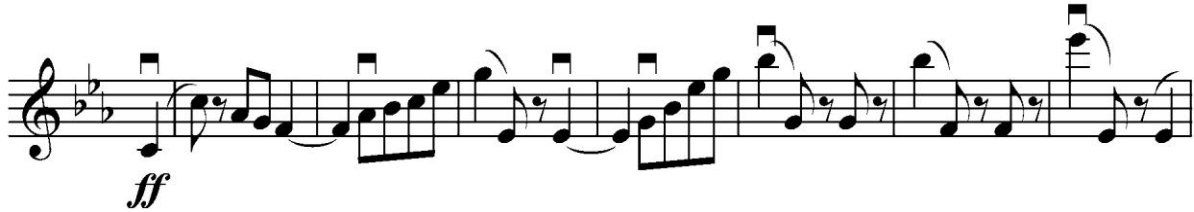
The motion tears ever more violently. The themes of the first Ländler appear again, no longer with measured leaping as before, and swept into the vortex of the new dance. It presses

incessantly and builds. The yelping horn chords call, strings hammer, woodwinds rush and fly in unison runs. Harmonies swirl in hardly recognizable exchanges, while trombones and timpani are heard in brief, violent interjections. A fantastic frenzy takes hold of everything. There now sound deep, long-held horn calls. The motion subsides.²² A tender F-major tune gently dawns in a “very slow” (“ganz langsam”) Ländler tempo:



[Example 9-43: first violins and cellos, mm. 218-221; oboe, mm. 221-225]

Softly and dreamily, violins and oboes sing. Is it a reminiscence of the major-key theme of the first movement? The dance motives of the beginning accompany and emerge episodically in tender A-major tones, adapted to the character of the new tune. But it is only temporarily capable of restraining the wild forces. The second waltz theme again presses upward, this time beginning in D major, more quickly than before, more unruly in chromatic exchanges and storming with harsh sound mixtures.²³ Once more the slow Ländler theme, weaving the voices yet more subtly into one another than before, fades away, unfinished, with a dominant seventh chord on B. The bass motive of the opening now falters in again out of the silence, passing from the first Ländler to the waltz with rapid motion. Now there is no more searching and chromatic confusion. The orchestra sounds in crass coarseness, like a gigantic barrel organ. Heavy brass and horns accompany with an obtrusive rhythm, and over it, violins and woodwinds swing the vulgar waltz melody:



[Example 9-44: violins, mm. 424-431, with some doubling from high winds]

A likewise vulgar G-flat-major is appended:



[Example 9-45: flutes, oboes, clarinets, mm. 445-452]

Unrelenting, the dance whips forward, turning into the opening theme of the waltz. Brass, strings, and woodwinds now sound only against each other in groups, in massively concentrated harmonies and shrieking unison runs, ending after a shrill and jubilant A-flat major with a long-held unison trill on G. “Lamenting” (“Klagend”), from the trumpet, [348] the second Ländler melody is only hinted, like an admonishing vision:



[Example 9-46: trumpet, mm. 515-517; first violins, mm. 518-519, second violins, m. 520]

The memory is harshly rejected. The bass motive stumbles upward again, and the burlesque opening mood returns again. Yet it is no longer able to hold. A heavy chromatic cloud sinks, pressing to the deep:



[Example 9-47: flutes, first oboe, mm. 566-569]

Individual wind voices flutter upward. In mystical harmonies of muted trombones, tuba, and stopped horns, the motion dies:

[Example 9-48: horns, trombones, tuba, mm. 578-587]

Here and there, lost voices grope upward, motives are heard and interrupted, here a nearby call, there a distant half answer. In the eerie doubling of contrabassoon and piccolo, the bass motive of the opening floats away. Walpurgis Night is over.

“**Rondo. Burlesque,**” Mahler heads the third movement. “Dedicated to my brothers in Apollo” reads the addition in the original score.²⁴ This piece is also a look back at life with its unrestrained busyness, into which the sound of creation only sounds in a distorted way, drowned out by the powers of the here and now, which are always breaking out in new transformations. It

is a self-ridicule of the artist, valid for all whose home is not this world of errors, and who, like him, are striving to cross to the other shore. It is a piece of caustic contempt for the world, and yet grown out of deep tragedy. He who so represents this world, who lets it be so aimlessly tumbled over and chased down, he has loved it with every fiber, loves it still, even after he has recognized its nothingness in the reflection of death. Mahler thus again chooses his tragic key of A minor, as he had used it in the second movement of the Fifth, in the Sixth, in the “Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde.” He even obviously reaches back to one of the earlier pieces in the thematic shaping, especially in the treatment of rhythm. The thrusting eighth-note rhythm in the Rondo of the Ninth is unmistakably patterned after the opening motive of the second movement of the Fifth. Yet another symbol indicates the meaning of this piece. The motive of life in chromatic distortion, the sequence of intervals turned upside down, provides, sharply blasted out by the trumpet, the dissonant opening sound of this “Allegro assai, sehr trotzig” (“very defiant”):



[Example 9-49: trumpet, m. 1 with upbeat; strings, mm. 1-2; horns, mm. 2-3]

Horns take up the trumpet call. Very weighty, tense chords of winds and strings—they are reminiscent of the Finale of the First—crash into each other in a ruthlessly harsh harmonic sequence:



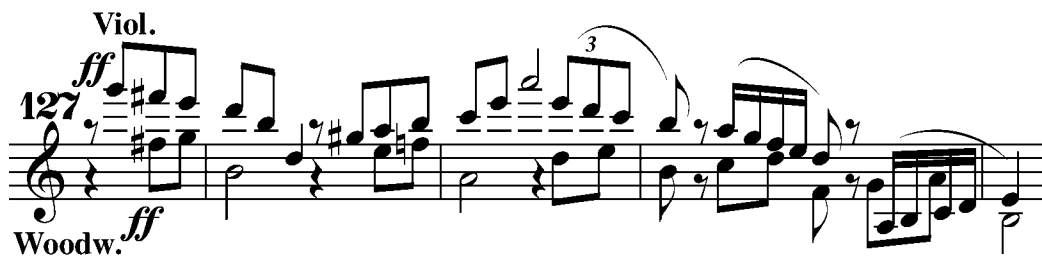
[Example 9-50: full orchestra, mm. 3-6 (penultimate chord lacks A-flat)]²⁵

Plunging after them, received by a trombone calling the motive of life, is a theme of unrestrained rhythmic strength: [349]



[Example 9-51: first violins, mm. 6-10; second violins, mm. 6-14; trombones, mm. 7-8]

At first assigned to both violin groups in unison, only accompanied by string basses in hard rhythms, it quickly spreads itself out across the whole orchestra in a diverse confusion of motives and then arrives, storming further, at a defiant and powerful close on the dominant in the strings:



[Example 9-52: violins, oboes, clarinets, mm. 18-22]

Here the motion suddenly falls down from a sharp *forte* sound into *piano*. In quiet *staccato* motives of the strings, it continues to work as isolated, incisive wind calls sound between them. There is a rapid swelling. The winds assemble themselves in choirs, and horns take up the theme with rhythmic intensification:



[Example 9-53: horns, mm. 43-47]

Clarinets provide the continuation while flutes and oboes sound in unison. In the strings, the violent triplet motion of the horns propagates, grows, and builds in confused waves of agitated rhythms, while horns intone an embellished accompanying theme that will later become independent:



[Example 9-54: horns, mm. 59-63]

Now the strings and woodwinds again seize control of the leadership, and the introductory chords are extended in a march-like manner:



[Example 9-55: first violins, mm. 63-71]

Almost everything is played with specifically prescribed, heavy downbow strokes. It is no light play of notes, oppressive even in the most animated motion, provoking with hardness and stubbornness. Trombones enter in with powerfully reaching half-measure strides in D minor; four flutes, three oboes, and the shrilly whistling piccolo give the unison accompaniment of the theme, now set loose in rushing eighth notes:

Woodw.
Tbn. Tuba
f

[Example 9-56: piccolo, flutes, oboes, trombones, tuba, mm. 78-82]²⁶

Now the trumpet belts out the theme, and then the voices exchange: violins bring the half-measure notes in broadly striding *fortissimo*, and the eighth-note runs rant in the basses. It is a *moto perpetuo* with inexhaustible strength of motion and of mutability, the most extreme tension of every fiber. Then a sudden change. The horn theme falls to the strings and is further led by them “*leggiere*” in a leisurely, trifling transmutation:²⁷ [350]



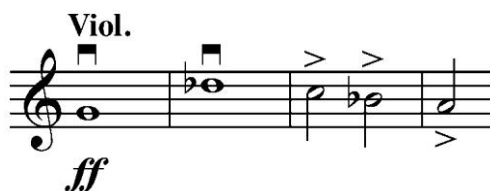
[Example 9-57: first violins, mm. 108-116, oboe, mm. 108-110]

In the place of busy restlessness steps a comfortable breadth. A songlike, skipping continuation of the theme in horn and woodwinds remains in the same sphere of mood:



[Example 9-58: horn 1, mm. 158-166, partly doubled by oboes and horn 2, mm. 163-166]

The sound of the triangle enters. A sharp cymbal beat and thrusting *fortissimo* E-flat in the horns. It calls up again the forces of the first theme. Wilder than before, darkened from A minor to A-flat minor, they rage up. Trombones and trumpets seize the theme, and the remaining orchestral voices run unison in large groups, so that the orchestral lines obtain a fanatical regularity of motion. A minor is again reached in the storm, and the newly won home key provides further intensification of strength. It now no longer divides itself into running motion. It condenses itself, masses itself together. The upper voices stride in chorale-like full-measure sonorities:



[Example 9-59: first violins, mm. 246-249]

4 Horns

f *ff* *ff*

Again the triangle beckons. For the second time, the relaxing idyll dawns, now in A-major sounds, the melody assigned to horn, oboe, and clarinet in an attractive form:

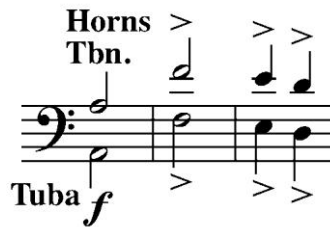
Horns, Ob., Clar.



f *dim.* *p* *cresc.* *f* *p subito*

Strings quietly play around the singing winds. The serene mood becomes stronger and culminates in a jaunty, humorous horn melody:

With admonishment, the full-measure motive resounds in a trombone call:



[Example 9-63: bass clarinet, bassoons, horns, trombones, tuba, mm. 308-310]

It is repeated more strongly by three trombones and two horns in unison. The chorale voice becomes the lead in the combined sound of the four horns, and under it, the opening theme storms up in the basses:



[Example 9-64: horns, cellos, basses, mm. 311-316 (low strings out after first beat of m. 316)]

The *cantus firmus* continues to sound. A new countermelody in the violins grows up, mixed with components of the first theme: [351]



[Example 9-65: oboes, first violins, clarinets, bassoons, cellos, basses, mm. 320-323]

It drives further, and the motives of the opening theme fall more and more to the wayside. Under a suddenly flaring *tremolo* A of the first violins and flutter-tongue flutes, the chorale sounds victoriously in horns and trombones. Following it directly, the countermelody in D major quietly blossoms in the trumpet, expanded and confirmed by flutes:

The image shows a musical score snippet for four instruments: Violins (Viol.), Flutes, Trumpet (Trump.), and Trombone (Tbn.). The Violins part starts with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic and a *subito* marking, followed by a *poco espress.* (poco espressivo) marking. The Flutes part starts with a *p* (piano) dynamic. The Trumpet part starts with a *p* dynamic. The Trombone part starts with a *p* dynamic. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests and others containing beamed notes. The overall mood is one of quiet triumph and expansion.

[Example 9-66: trumpet, flutes, mm. 352-359; first violins, mm. 352-353; trombones, mm. 358-359]

It is a moment that is reminiscent both sonically and psychologically of the second movement of the Fifth, which is closely related to this Rondo. Here as there, the A-minor storm is interrupted and appeased by a D-major vision. Here as there the D-major proclamation is a premonition and promise of the finale, for the closing Adagio of the Ninth also sprouts from this D-major inspiration. There are certainly differences in details. In the Fifth, the brass chorale arrives in full glory, in the Rondo of the Ninth it only tenderly gleams. It is no longer a promise of happy and active being as it once was, but only a celestial salutation, the hope of future peace that is far from life. Thus, this quietly shining D-major light stands in the midst of the storms and forces of the demonic Burlesque. In gentle solo voices of individual winds, it spreads itself out under the *tremolo* of the violins, is soon drawn into minor, and then taken up by violins “with great feeling” (“mit großer Empfindung”) and spun further:

Mit großer Empfindung
Viol. **f** \rightrightarrows **p** *ma molto espress.* \leftrightsquigarrow **f**

ff **ff** Vcl. **ff**

[Example 9-67: first violins, mm. 394-412; second violins, mm. 402-412; cellos and horns, mm. 410-412]

But it does not hold. A dark seventh chord in muted trombones and stopped horns sounds from the depths:

Stopped horns
Muted trombones **pp**

sf **tr** **tr** **tr** **tr**

Timpani

[Example 9-68: horns, trombones, tuba, timpani, mm. 438-441 (flutes, mm. 438-439)]

The distorted major-key melody sounds from A and E-flat clarinets:

Clar. **ff** **sf**

[Example 9-69: clarinets, mm. 444-445]

The minor-key motives swell up in trombones and horns. Once more the promise quietly resounds, and then it disappears in the darkness of growing opposing forces. First ghostly, quietly groping, and then breaking out with violence, they rise. Trombones belt out the theme. Everything is built up to a demonic magnificence. Cymbals, triangle, and glockenspiel are heard, as are horns with ringing appoggiaturas. Groups in choral unity, *sforzati* on unstressed beats, wind trills, and eighth-note harmonies of the heavy brass running in contrary motion. The image from the “Trinklied vom Jammer,” the picture of the ghostly ape, who screams out his howl upon the graves of the past, appears, enlarged to a gigantic size. Without interruption, without a mitigating contrast, it rages from Allegro to Più stretto, then into an accelerated Presto in three-bar groups. Very briefly, a reminder of the promise flares up one more time:



[Example 9-70: piccolo, flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns 1 and 3, trumpets 1 and 2, mm. 647-649; English horn, bass clarinet, bassoons, horns 2 and 4, trumpet 3, glockenspiel, mm. 648-649; violins, m. 647; violas, mm. 648-649]

[352] But it is now only a mocking distortion, for the storm finds no more resistance. Furiously, it whips forward, and a world appears to splinter in garish dissonances. Victoriously, trombones and trumpets blare out the triumphal call of annihilation in the closing chord.

Was this life? A pointless frenzy, out of which the presentiment of higher worlds laboriously struggled to emerge, incapable of holding on, and was again forced down into the

grim fury of battle without momentum or objective? Groaning out of the deepest pain, a turn away from this world view, a yearning for another life, for an existence without struggle or the drive of the will. Both groups of violins slide slowly down in heavy accents:



[Example 9-71: violins, mm. 1-2]

A profound and peaceful Adagio begins to ring out. Again, as once at the close of the Third, divine love narrates. But it is no longer the love of sprouting and blossoming, it is the love of dying nature. D major, the key of fulfilled life, sinks to D-flat major, the key of the sublime. The great Pan no longer appears as the creator, but as the redeemer. Becoming transforms into passing away. Death is divine love, and its majesty shines forth from the song of the strings:



[Example 9-72: first violins, mm. 3-11; second violins, mm. 3-4]²⁸

“Always with great tone” (“Stets großer Ton”), “*molto adagio, molto espressivo*” reads the instruction. The highest intensity of feeling is required. It is not a song of mourning, but one of

solemn awe, the manifestation of the last face. Only the string quintet sounds in a low register, and cellos are divided for a heightening of the full sonority. The significance of the melodic lead in the upper voice emerges, and in the accompanying voices, with emphatic accentuation, the promise motive of the Rondo, temporarily sidelined, wrests itself upward:



[Example 9-73: violas, lower voice of cellos, m. 6]²⁹

After the first song fades away in the first violins, *morendo*, a minor-key motive rises up from the depths “slowly” (“*langsam*”) in a bassoon solo:



[Example 9-74: bassoon, mm. 11-12]

It flows into the promise motive, which suddenly and strongly thrusts out of all bass voices:



[Example 9-75: cellos and basses, mm. 13-14, second violins, m. 14]

“Stricter in tempo (“Straffer im Tempo”), “*molto espressivo*,” strings are added to the winds with a broad tone.³⁰ For the second time, the song melody is heard, this time initially assigned to the “strongly prominent” (“stark hervortretend”) horn:



[Example 9-76: horn, mm. 17-18]

Strings take over the continuation, swelling in fullness and dynamics to a string body that is now, through the division of the violas, in seven voices. “Suddenly slow again and somewhat hesitant” (“Plötzlich wieder langsam und etwas zögernd”). From cellos and contrabassoon sounds “without feeling” (“ohne Empfindung”) the C-sharp-minor theme. [353] Over it span only the first violins, sinking slowly down from the heights, against the bass voice, which is led like a recitative:

[Example 9-77: first violins, contrabassoon, cellos, basses, mm. 28-33 (first violins extended to first beat of m. 34)]

The voices come closer together, reach into one another, and exchange. The violin melody sinks into the depth of the basses, and the bass voice rises up to the violins. Tender wind registers

sound in a preparatory way and, *Molto adagio*, the main melody begins for the third time, released more than before from the solemn calm of the opening into a gently flowing motion:



[Example 9-78: horn, second violins, mm. 49-50]

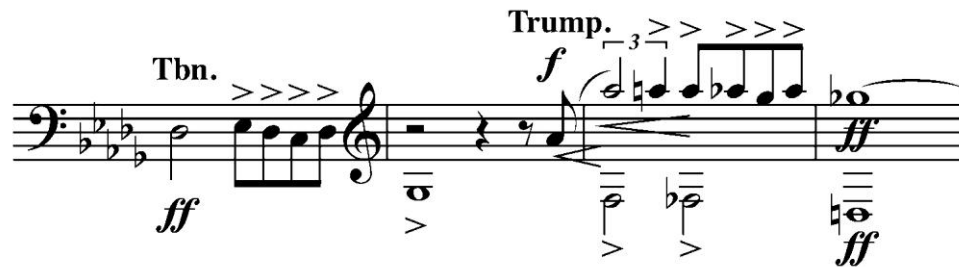
Strings again take over the continuation, broadly swelling and pulling the winds along with them.

The promise motive comes forward independently in a tender weaving of the string voices:

[Example 9-79: first and second violins, mm. 73-77; cellos, mm. 73-74; basses, mm. 75-77; violas, m. 77]

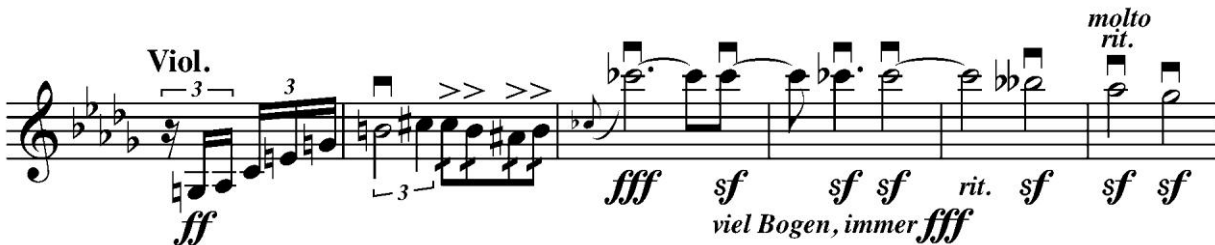
In a mystical C-sharp-minor line, the minor-key theme of the basses emerges, sounding from the most diverse voices and registers, now answered by the promise motive, now by the main theme. The sound swells slowly and mightily in an urgent motion. Strings, woodwinds, and the brass

choir breathe with an ever more strongly undulating motion. Over a roll from timpani and bass drum, trombones and trumpets solemnly intone the promise motive:



[Example 9-80: trombones, mm. 118-121, trumpets, mm. 120-121 with upbeat]

The moaning introductory call of the violins changes into the expression of the greatest excitement:



[Example 9-81: violins, mm. 120-125, with viola and cello doubling in m. 121]

Triple *forte*, “whole bow” (“viel Bogen”), *sforzati* on every note, everything with downbow—it is as if the soul must break in the face of the trembling intensity. In shattering splendor and glory, the song thunders in the choir of trombones and tuba, flooded by broad waves of sound in the horns, strings, and woodwinds. The most powerful majesty is revealed. This life and the next are no longer separate worlds. They flow together at the sight of the eternal. The consciousness of individuality, of pain, of joy vanishes. Mankind sinks into the universe of creative, gloriously living, incorruptible nature. Slowly, that which is of this earth dissolves. It falls like dust, the

voices flow more and more lightly upward, floating [354] into incomprehensible heights.

Adagissimo, “with intimate feeling, hesitantly” (“mit inniger Empfindung, zögernd”), the last sounds:

Langsam und *ppp* bis zum Schluß
1. Viol.
pp *ppp* mit inniger Empfindung ersterbend *ppp*
2. Viol. *pp* Violas *dim.*

[Example 9-82: first violins, mm. 162-176; second violins, mm. 172-177; violas, m. 176]³¹

In the most extreme distance, the picture fades. Second violins, cellos, and between them, only still moving in a dreamlike way, a tender triplet wave of the violas, give the closing sound, “dying away” (“ersterbend”):

1. Viol. *pppp* 2. Viol. *ppp* *ersterbend*
Vcl. *ppp* Vla. *ppp*

[Example 9-83: first and second violins, violas, cellos, mm. 183-185]

Here expires the light that only quietly still flickered. Mahler dies with a last word on his lips, his Tenth, but finally unable to speak it. He returns again to the great nature from which he came, and finding the way back to which was the longing of his life. He has sung to it the song of heaven and earth, of flowers and beasts, of men and angels, of night and day, of pain and love,

of life and death. Now silence takes him over. The flame has consumed him from within, and the shell falls away.

It is the fate of a great man that has lived within his works. Of a deeply human man who wandered as a stranger among strangers on the earth and yet did not comprehend this unfamiliarity because he felt the command of love within himself. Of one who did not know himself, yet searched for himself. This search was his creative work. He created until he arrived at the secret of death, until he also lifted this veil. There, the course was completed.

Was it a coincidence that Mahler thus died? An unanswered question that cannot be answered. This is shown by the complete works: the high-swung portal of the First Symphony, the six mighty pillars of the three *Wunderhorn* and the three instrumental symphonies, over which spans the brilliant dome of the Eighth, from whence sounds the farewell song of *Das Lied von der Erde* and then from this very height, the prophetic, distant view into the undiscovered country. If one looks over the whole, the conviction comes with force, despite all rationalistic considerations: finished. This life, as it represents itself in its creations, was the greatest artistic work of Mahler. He had beheld himself. What he experienced in doing this is proclaimed by his works. For whoever relives them this life is renewed with its raptures and pains, its shattering ecstasies, its grueling and yet liberating conclusion. It is not the life of a hero and Promethean demigod like Beethoven. It is the life of a human being. And thus it lives on. The magic spell of this spiritual event draws ever larger circles. Whoso falls under this spell can escape from it in no other way [355] than to give himself completely unto it and be born again from it. That is the significance of Gustav Mahler's art. The consciousness of artifice vanishes, and only the power of the artistic revelation continues to act.

Was Mahler actually a great musician? Can we think of him when we speak of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, and Wagner? To raise the question could mean to answer it in the negative. Does not much in his scores appear to be temporally conditioned and limited, lacking in basic musical instinct, more a product of grandly soaring spiritual vitality than of a creative force that is rooted in musical things? Is it the purpose of art to create life, as Mahler did? Does not the artistic drive spin its creative web in other regions, far from human sorrows and joys?

It may be that in the direct reference to one's own experience, in the forward thrust of that which is personal and painful, in this self-representation, lay a weakness in Mahler's nature. From this weakness, however, emerged for him, as for a later generation of the great creative figures, the possibility for creation. It was necessary to fill the symphony with new life and purpose, to newly establish the ethos of the form. Today, we are not yet able to gauge where Mahler stands historically. He was perhaps not a great musician in the sense of a basic musical compulsion, as it elementally broke through in Bach, Mozart, and Schubert. Beethoven and Wagner stand in another line. For them, the pathos and ethos of the form signified how it grew from human experience, a significant moment of creation. Like them, Mahler was a prophetic nature who spoke with notes and sounds. What he pronounced was a spiritual revelation for which the sonic aspects remained only a means of making it perceptible. Standards of special artistic aesthetics are here inadequate. The decisive element in the limitless effect of such creative natures lies in the prophetic force of their work.

Our time is lacking not so much in the ability to create as in the ability to observe and understand, to believe. It has lost the gift of viewing what is essential in things; it measures that which is begotten of the spirit according to rules of the craft. Mahler was full of this spirit, of the

primeval creator of all things. His work bears witness of it. If we wish to again reach this source of life, if we wish to again comprehend the Divine and great, the sublime and immortal that lies concealed in the nature of mankind, which carries it above the barriers of earthly limitations, then the work of Mahler must be our guide. It is the only work of our time that points the way to those heights urged by the yearning of all times.³² [356 blank]

NOTES

- 1 Bekker's treatment of the chapter on the Ninth Symphony as separate from the preceding one on *Das Lied von der Erde* is ambiguous. He includes a "dual" title page for both works on p. 209 after a "sectional" page called "Der Abschied" on p. 207. The latter is similar to the "sectional" pages titled "Erster Kreis: Die Wunderhorn-Sinfonien" and "Zweiter Kreis: Die Instrumental-Sinfonien" on p. 65 and p. 169. Full title pages are given for chapters on every symphony from No. 2 to No. 7, which are separate from their "sectional" pages. No. 8 is independent from the "sections," as indicated by its title page (p. 267), which, unlike the others, includes the article "Die." No. 1 has a "combined" sectional and title page ("Das Vorspiel: Erste Sinfonie") on p. 35, and the opening "Symphonic Style" chapter also has its own title page. Despite the lack of a separate title page for No. 9, p. 337 marks a clear break from the preceding *Das Lied von der Erde* material. It lacks a page number and a running heading, as does the actual first page of material for all the other chapters. The following odd-numbered pages from p. 339 on have the running heading "Neunte Sinfonie." The previous odd-numbered pages, from pp. 313-35, have the running heading "Das Lied von der Erde." The first page of material in the "dual" chapter, p. 311, has neither page number nor running heading, like p. 337. Both works are listed separately in Bekker's table of contents under the section "Der Abschied," but curiously, p. 309, the "dual" title page, is listed for both. I have chosen to treat them as separate chapters with notes at the end of each. This is based on their clearly separate discussion and the large number of examples for each. I retain Bekker's "dual" title page. It should be noted that the introductory material in pp. 311-16 of Bekker, included with the *Das Lied von der Erde* chapter, deals primarily with that work, despite incidental discussions of the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies and Mahler's late style in general. All page numbers in this note refer to Bekker's original.
- 2 As will be seen throughout this chapter, it is in his analysis of the Ninth where Bekker deviates most from later analysts and commentators. This is most evident in the perception of the relationships between movements and the form of the first movement (see below). The most extensive analysis of the Ninth is that of Christopher Orlo Lewis, whose highly complex study is based on the idea of "double-tonic complexes" and their implications. He convincingly establishes that the tonal complexes of each movement are laid out in a highly organized plan, a tonal network or plot that applies to the whole work. The idea of the "double-tonic complex" originated with Robert Bailey, who coined the term in the context of Wagner studies (See *Wagner: Prelude and Transfiguration from 'Tristan and Isolde'*, edited by Robert Bailey [Norton Critical Scores. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985], pp. 121-46, and "The Structure of the 'Ring' and its Evolution" in *19th-Century Music* 1/1 [1977], pp. 48-61). The tonal network or plot is an extension of these ideas. Lewis's overstatement that "the final resolution to D-flat . . . signifies the end not only of the last movement, but of the whole symphonic structure which has unfolded as a single artistic entity through a multiplicity of tonal dimensions across the almost superficial division into movements" (Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony* [Studies in Musicology: No. 79; Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1984], p. 117) seems an almost direct contradiction of Bekker's assertion that "each movement is only there for its own sake," although the qualifier "the symphonic unity only results from the complete picture" shows that even at this early stage of the work's history, analysts were in search of unity. The contradiction is not as clear-cut as Lewis would have us believe. The suite-like effect of the four pieces is persistent to the casual listener as well as to those who are intimately acquainted with the work. Even Stephen E. Hefling, who knew Lewis's work well, remarked that "compared with Mahler's earlier symphonic worlds, each of the Ninth's movements is relatively independent; no overarching symphonic drama compels the work to move through the cycle" ("The Ninth Symphony" in *The Mahler Companion*, ed. Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], p. 469). As late as 1985, Constantin Floros quoted Bekker's statement here and essentially agreed with it. See *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), p. 276.

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- 3 The score calls for two players on two instruments each. Bekker's word "Pauken" is ambiguous.
- 4 As in the opening section of the chapter on *Das Lied von der Erde*, Bekker again makes fascinating comments about Mahler's orchestration in the late style, this time in the context of a purely instrumental work. See pp. 720-23 and p. 772, note 12. The statement about a "type of perception based on ideas" recalls Arnold Schoenberg. Matthew Arndt, who traces Schoenberg's theories to the influence of Schopenhauer, quotes certain passages of Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* in this context: "Like Schopenhauer, Schoenberg regards art as an imitation of inner nature, of ideas apprehended through immersion in perception; he says art reaches its goal 'when the idea involved has been clearly presented.'" Arndt also states that "for Schoenberg perception of the idea in nature takes place partly in 'the subconscious,' which means that idea cannot be fully known here, because knowledge is a form of consciousness." See Arndt, "Schenker and Schoenberg on the Tone and the Genius" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008), pp. 55-56. Bekker almost certainly knew *Harmonielehre*, whose first edition was published in 1911. There is a further connection in Bekker's reference to the subconscious on p. 781 below.
- 5 This is another major point on which many later commentators would disagree with Bekker. Most understand the first movement as a rather unambiguous, albeit unconventional sonata form. Such an understanding is crucial to Lewis's double-tonic analysis of the movement, although his observation that "Mahler's design for the first movement of the Ninth Symphony differs from the common-practice sonata form" may elucidate early statements such as Bekker's (see *Tonal Coherence*, pp. 13-14). Indeed, Theodor Adorno's comment: "The technical procedures exactly fit the content. The conflict with the schemata is decided against the latter" (*Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], p. 156), is not far removed from Bekker's ideas here. Floros, citing Bekker, acknowledges this early view, but, referring to analyses by Erwin Ratz and others, arrives at a sonata form (with variation aspects) that approximates the model of Lewis (*The Symphonies*, p. 277). See also Erwin Ratz, "Zum Formproblem bei Gustav Mahler: Eine Analyse des ersten Satzes der IX. Symphonie," *Die Musikforschung* 8 (1955), pp. 169-77. It should be noted that Bekker's was the first large-scale analysis of the Ninth, and he was working without precedent. Even the *Meisterführer*, No. 10, "Mahlers Symphonien," published by Schlesinger (Berlin) in 1910, which was the most extensive study before Bekker, only went through the Eighth Symphony.
- 6 The correspondence by inversion of these two thematic cells is commonly noted. Hefling cites Bekker here ("The Ninth Symphony," p. 472).
- 7 This passage, from "An apotheosis of death . . .," is quoted by David B. Greene, who includes a chapter on the Ninth in his exploration of "consciousness and temporality" in Mahler. Here, the passage is used to illustrate the idea of key symbolism. See Greene, *Mahler: Consciousness and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), p. 295.
- 8 Mahler's alleged premonitions of his own death, hinted at earlier by Bekker, have been the cause of much dispute, and are now regarded as a fabrication or at least an exaggeration on the part of Alma Mahler. Hefling summarizes the arguments at the beginning of his essay. See "The Ninth Symphony," pp. 467-69. See also Stuart Feder, *Gustav Mahler: A Life in Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). Mahler's preoccupation with death is a major topic of Feder's study, which also deals with the many moments of "crisis" in Mahler's life, including his early brush with death in 1901. Feder says that "to say that Mahler simply feared death misses the complexity of his experience" (p. 62).

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- 9 Bekker's statement here is widely circulated, and the idea is ubiquitous in studies of the symphony. Floros provides an excellent summation in *The Symphonies*, pp. 272-75. Besides Bekker, Richard Specht, Guido Adler, Willem Mengelberg, and Alban Berg are among those Floros cites as early purveyors of "Farewell, Death, and Transfiguration" as the central topics of the symphony. Floros also quotes Bernd Sponheuer, who disliked these interpretations, as an opposing viewpoint. Curiously, Adorno, whose ideas in general owe so much to Bekker, openly disdains the formulation "What Death Tells Me," which Bekker coined, without mentioning him by name. He calls it "a title foisted on Mahler's Ninth . . . even more distasteful in its distortion of a moment of truth than the flowers and beasts of the Third, which may well have been in the composer's mind" (*Mahler*, p. 3). Perhaps the most familiar modern statement of the idea, now colored by the experience of the intervening half-century, was by Leonard Bernstein in the fifth of his celebrated series of Charles Eliot Norton Lectures at Harvard, delivered November 6, 1973: "Ours is the century of death, and Mahler is its musical prophet" (*The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976], p. 313). The statement was made in advance of a filmed performance of the Ninth's Finale, which concluded the lecture. The problem of biographical references inspiring readings of the symphonies, whether there is some sort of "program" or not, is a persistent problem in Mahler studies. On the other hand, reading the Ninth as an illustration of death is reasonable, and is not dependent upon Mahler's biography.
- 10 This motive is given particular significance by Lewis, who uses the "metrically accented and sustained B" as a departure point for his analysis of the double-tonic complex based on thirds, where B (and later B-flat) are the equivalent lower thirds to D, generating the secondary tonal area of the movement. See *Tonal Coherence*, pp. 14-15.
- 11 As Hefling notes, "many commentators have suggested that in both the Ninth and *Das Lied* this gesture alludes to Beethoven's explicitly programmatic 'Lebewohl' Sonata, Op. 81a . . . and Mahler's annotation 'Leb' wol! Leb' wol!' over its surfacing on the penultimate page of his draft score for the first movement of the Ninth would seem to support this interpretation" ("The Ninth Symphony," p. 474, illustrative examples on p. 473). Greene takes it a step further, labeling Mahler's two-note version of the motive the "Ewig" motive, based on the setting of that word to this pattern at the end of *Das Lied von der Erde* (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 263-75). In any case, the "Lebewohl" motive is not completed until the very last note of the movement, in the piccolo and a cello harmonic. The short-breathed, one-bar pulses are also noted by Hefling (p. 472) and Adorno. Adorno considered this movement Mahler's masterpiece and used particularly enthusiastic language when discussing it, such as "The splendor of immediate life reflected in the medium of memory" (*Mahler*, p. 155). Hefling applies this idea to the entire first thematic area through m. 26 (p. 474).
- 12 The identity of this theme is one of the primary obstacles to an interpretation of the movement in sonata form. It has the same tonal center as the main theme, only exhibiting a change of mode, a change that is even less important in post-Wagnerian music, where twelve chromatic "modes" increasingly replace concepts of "major" and "minor." The principal material returns after its presentation. Yet when a new key center *does* arrive (B-flat), it is with this "secondary" thematic material. This also contributes to a secondary interpretation of the form as a "double variation" (see, e.g., Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 277 and Hefling, "The Ninth Symphony," p. 474. See also Lewis's formal outline in *Tonal Coherence*, p. 13).
- 13 This is really, as Hefling notes, "a bright B-flat cadence" ("The Ninth Symphony," p. 471). The "measure in heroic E-flat major" to which Bekker refers is either m. 105 or m. 106, and his labeling of this climactic moment in that key is probably due to the presence of the note G, which is the "added sixth" in B-flat and has implications for the following passage (the beginning of the development section) in G minor. See also Lewis,

Tonal Coherence, p. 21. Bekker's treatment of this pivotal structural moment seems uncharacteristically superficial, but it is consistent with his analysis that does not see some version of sonata form. That m. 107 is in fact the end of the exposition is confirmed by Hefling, who notes that there was a repeat sign at this point in Mahler's draft score. A double bar was retained in the final score.

- 14 Bekker curiously chooses not to include an example with this important D-major variant of the main theme, which incorporates a subtle quotation of the Johann Strauss waltz tune "Freut Euch des Lebens" (See Hefling, "The Ninth Symphony," p. 476). It does appear as an incidental counterpoint in a later example (here labeled 9-28). The frequent recurrence of D major and minor across this "development section" has long provided another argument against an interpretation in traditional sonata form (See Floros, *The Symphonies*, p. 278).
- 15 Floros notes that this passage, with its harmonies and imitations, is particularly similar to passages from Beethoven's "Lebewohl" Sonata. See *The Symphonies*, p. 281.
- 16 Because he does not view the movement as a sonata form, Bekker does not identify this as a moment of recapitulation. Placement of the recapitulation varies among analysts, primarily over whether the passage from m. 337 to m. 347 is part of the retransition or part of the reprise itself. Adorno's comment regarding the music following the last catastrophic passage is particularly apt: "The music develops by losing the detachment with which it began. It goes back into the world . . . Memory forgets to reflect on itself until deceiving immediacy receives at its height a terrible blow, the memento of fragility. Its hands retain nothing but ruins and a dubious flattering solace: music draws fatally back into itself. Hence the recapitulation of a movement that otherwise . . . stands askew to the sonata" (*Mahler*, p. 155).
- 17 Adorno would comment that "there is formed a prolonged cadenza-like solo duet between a flute and a horn treated with unprecedented audacity, accompanied on the low strings . . ." (*Mahler*, p. 157). The similarity of the linear counterpoint in this passage with those in portions of "Der Abschied" from *Das Lied von der Erde*, which was heavily emphasized by Bekker in the previous chapter, is remarkable. Therefore, it is unusual that he does not comment more extensively on the passage.
- 18 Adorno also described the movement as a "Totentanz," or dance of death, "more serenely struck in the Fourth" (*Mahler*, p. 161). Floros makes a further point that the direction for the violins to play "like fiddles" is reminiscent of the re-tuned solo violin in the Scherzo of the Fourth (*The Symphonies*, p. 284). It is interesting that in his opening chapter, Bekker groups these two symphonies together based on the nature of their *finales* (see pp. 64-65). See also the discussion of the "Dance of Death" as a topic of the Mahlerian Scherzo in Robert Samuels, *Mahler's Sixth Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 119-32.
- 19 The descending line of the clarinets outlines the "Lebewohl" motive.
- 20 A major point made by Lewis is that of the four main "dances" of the second movement, the Ländler, the two waltzes, and the slow Ländler (or "minuet" as he terms it), this first waltz is the only one that is in a different key in each of its appearances. The first appearance, in E major, is particularly notable, as the key never returns in the movement, and it has broader implications for the tonal structure of the Finale (see *Tonal Coherence*, pp. 52-54). It is also the principal source of what Lewis terms the "motto" theme (and the accompanying "motto progression," see below), which will become the main theme of the Finale (p. 50). This "motto" is also directly related to the "Lebewohl" theme of the first movement (see Hefling, "The Ninth Symphony," p. 474).

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- 21 Analysts (including Hefling, Floros, and Lewis) generally refer to this material as the second waltz or “Waltz II.” As noted by Floros (*The Symphonies*, p. 285), this material is probably what Adorno had in mind when he referred to “wild vulgarisms” (*Mahler*, p. 162). Anthony Newcomb ascribes a particular willful “agency” to this version of the waltz, or what he terms “Dance B.” Newcomb argues that “Dance B” always asserts itself brusquely and in a manner that interrupts the previous material, threatening more and more to take over the entire movement, but being just as willfully stopped in its tracks. See “Action and Agency in Mahler’s Ninth Symphony, Second Movement” in *Music and Meaning*, edited by Jenefer Robinson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 131-53.
- 22 In Mahler’s draft score for this movement, which was heavily revised before the final version, the main Ländler material returned here. In the final version, this return was moved to *after* the slow Ländler, preceding the final return of the waltz material. In his analysis, Lewis posits several possible reasons for Mahler’s revision of the draft. See *Tonal Coherence*, pp. 43-46 and 57-63.
- 23 The recurrence of the waltz material in the midst of the “slow Ländler” supports a formal structure where the entire “slow Ländler” is essentially the “Trio” (rather than “Trio II”) of the movement, and that the waltz material has a function more of a “refrain” rather than as “Trio I.” Otherwise, this return of the waltz material in D would have the effect of a “trio within a trio.” See Lewis’s formal diagram in *Tonal Coherence*, p. 44. This is also where the “motto progression,” a series of ascending bass half-steps with their accompanying harmonies, each one a third lower, is articulated. See *Tonal Coherence*, p. 50. See also Hefling’s illustrations of the occurrences of the “motto progression” in the last three movements in “The Ninth Symphony,” p. 482.
- 24 The source for this “dedication” is the musicologist Guido Adler, Mahler’s close friend and associate. See Edward R. Reilly, *Gustav Mahler and Guido Adler: Records of a Friendship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 54. No manuscript known today contains it. Reilly’s translation of and commentary on Adler’s biography is invaluable.
- 25 While most of Lewis’s very involved analysis of this movement is devoted to establishing D and F as main tonal centers in addition to A, he is also concerned with establishing the importance of D-flat, the note and the harmony, in preparation for the Finale. The penultimate chord of this example is one of the earliest instances of prominent D-flat harmony. See *Tonal Coherence*, p. 68.
- 26 This passage, regarded as a part of the first main section by Lewis (*Tonal Coherence*, p. 66), is set apart as an intermediary *fugato* by both Hefling and Floros (“The Ninth Symphony,” p. 484 and *The Symphonies*, p. 287). Floros considers the *fugato* passages to be “developments of the main section.”
- 27 In this movement, as in the symphony as a whole, and to a greater extent than elsewhere in the book, Bekker is vague about formal divisions and structural points, which are admittedly often ambiguous. The following passage is universally recognized as the first “episode” of the rondo form. Also, commentators almost universally accept Adorno’s comparison to the “Women” song in Lehár’s *Merry Widow* (*Mahler*, pp. 162-63).
- 28 This main theme has been subject to as much semantic interpretation as any in Mahler. Hefling, referring to Jack Diether and Deryck Cooke, provides a convincing argument for the similarity of the melody to the English hymn “Abide with Me” (“The Ninth Symphony,” p. 486, n. 77). David Greene also invokes the “hymn” motif in his description of the theme as the “Lebewohl hymn” (*Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 276-80). Hefling points out several apparent quotations from earlier works. Here, the eighth bar of the movement seems to make explicit reference to the “Urlicht” from the Second Symphony, which is in the same key.

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- 29 For no apparent reason, this example has only four flats in the original. Although it contains no G's, since the key and the key signature have not changed, it has been altered to five flats here.
- 30 The absence of the first violin line in this example, with its chromatic descent and subsequent upper neighbor motion, is an extremely curious aspect of Bekker's analysis in this movement. Indeed, he never quotes this figure in an example. Even when it appears in the trumpets at the movement's greatest climax, he omits the chromatic descent, bringing in the trumpets when the figure elides with what he calls the "promise motive," the prominent turn figure from the D-major episode of the Rondo-Burlesque (see example 9-80). The chromatic descent always appears in conjunction with the turn figure, and Bekker's emphasis on this "promise motive" may explain his neglect of its companion. A rather extreme contrast is provided by Greene, who devotes several pages to the significance of this "tragic fanfare" (referring to Deryck Cooke's description; see *Consciousness and Temporality*, pp. 280-90).
- 31 This example includes a quotation noted by many commentators. According to Floros, it was seen by Julius Korngold as early as 1912 (*The Symphonies*, p. 295, note 61), so Bekker may or may not have been aware of it. It is the phrase set to the words "Der Tag ist schön auf jenen Höh'n!" from the fourth of the *Kindertotenlieder*. "Jenen höh'n" ("those heights"), associated with "Jenseits" ("the other side," or "the next world"), provides an obvious symbolic link. Here, another point of later analysts, particularly Lewis, should be mentioned, that is, the several places in this movement where Mahler might have fulfilled an expectation to raise the final tonality to D major, the last of which occurs directly before this example (strong emphasis of the dominant of D in mm. 155-56). Bekker, who sees the arrival at D-flat major, the "key of the sublime," as a final destination, apparently sees no need to raise this expectation. As Greene says, "it becomes inescapably clear that the energies are too depleted for the music to yank itself up to D without sounding implausible and arbitrary" (*Consciousness and Temporality*, p. 296).
- 32 While strikingly brief, particularly in comparison to his large opening chapter, "The Symphonic Style," this beautiful epilogue by Bekker is unusually perceptive and even prophetic, considering when it was written. After Bekker, the upheavals of the Third Reich and the Second World War exacerbated what Donald Mitchell termed the "generally sorry history of the reception of Mahler's symphonies between the two World Wars" (Donald Mitchell, "Eternity or Nothingness? Mahler's Fifth Symphony" in *The Mahler Companion*, ed. Mitchell and Nicholson, p. 309). Champions such as Bruno Walter continued to advocate during this time. But Mahler experienced his Renaissance in the 1960s. Many of the feelings expressed during that decade by figures such as Leonard Bernstein are already strongly hinted here, including the assessment of Mahler in relation to other great musical figures, the idea of the proclamation of his life through his works, his oneness with nature and the Divine, etc. It is almost as if Bekker felt no need to state that "Mahler's time would come," for this was self-evident. At the beginning of his "In Memoriam" from 1912, Arnold Schoenberg made the simple statement that "Gustav Mahler was a saint" (*Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, edited by Leonard Stein, translations by Leo Black [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975], p. 447). While it is of great interest to compare Bekker's analysis of the symphonies to that of later writers and commentators, and to note those places, which are particularly evident in the case of the Ninth, where he failed to recognize certain aspects that would be discovered by a later generation, the groundbreaking, perceptive nature of Bekker's work should never be undervalued by Mahler scholarship.

NOTES (ANMERKUNGEN)¹

Gustav Mahler was born on July 7, 1860 in Kalischt (Bohemia).

All analyses are based on the study scores, which differ in details of instrumentation from the large scores that are intended for performance and were corrected later. In that it was less important to pursue a practical treatise on instrumentation than to recognize the original intention, I believed I should be permitted to make use of the study scores, especially as these are also more easily accessible to the reader than the large ones. The following data are, when nothing else is noted, taken from Guido Adler's commemorative Mahler publication (*Gedenkschrift*) that is cited in the bibliography. Other sources are individually noted.

FIRST SYMPHONY

Of the early works that were destroyed, those known by name are:

Quintet for Strings and Piano.

Sonata for Piano and Violin.

Opera, *Duke Ernst of Swabia* (*Herzog Ernst von Schwaben*).

Opera, *The Argonauts* (*Die Argonauten*).

Fairy tale opera, *Rübezahl*

Nordic Symphony (Adler).

Draft of the First Symphony 1885, completion 1888. First performance 1889 in Pest, published 1898.

At the performance in Pest, a program was not announced. At the two subsequent performances in Hamburg and Weimar (Music Festival [Tonkünstlerfest]), Mahler provided, according to a statement of Paul Stefan, the following program under the heading "Titan":

Part 1. From the Days of Youth, Pieces About Youth, Fruits, and Thorns.

1. Spring and No End. The introduction depicts the awakening of nature at earliest morning. (In Hamburg: Winter Slumber.)
2. Chapter of Flowers (Andante).
3. With Full Sails (Scherzo).

Part 2. Commedia umana.

4. Stranded. A Funeral March in Callot's Manner (Weimar: The Hunter's Burial).

As an explanation, the following, when necessary, will serve: The author obtained the external impetus for this piece of music through the parodistic picture, well-known to all children, "The Hunter's Burial" from an old children's fairy tale book: the animals of the forest lead the coffin of the dead forester to its grave, rabbits carry the small flag at the front, an orchestra of bohemian musicians, accompanied by musical cats, toads, crows, etc., and stags, roes, foxes, and other four-legged and feathered beasts of the forest

¹ Bekker's own notes on his book are presented here without commentary, except for two clarifying measure numbers below. Many things mentioned here by Bekker, such as letters, sketch pages, and other items, are discussed at length in the translator's notes on the individual chapters. The references to page numbers are changed to the corresponding number in this translation, with Bekker's original pages in brackets.

accompany the procession in comical positions. At this point, this piece is imagined as the expression of a now ironic and amusing, now sinister and brooding mood, upon which then immediately

5. Dall' inferno al Paradiso (Allegro furioso) follows, as the sudden outburst of a most deeply wounded heart.

The "Chapter of Flowers" called No. 2 in this explanation was destroyed.

The *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (*Songs of a Wayfarer*), composed 1884, were not composed throughout to texts by Mahler, as was previously assumed. The first piece, "Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht" ("On My Love's Wedding Day"), was taken from the *Wunderhorn*. Mahler must then have already known individual poems of the collection at this early time and perhaps became aware of the entire work through them. Siegfried Günther provided the first public notice about this (*Zeitschrift für Musik*, August 1920).

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SECOND SYMPHONY

Score completed June 1894, published 1896. First performance 1895, Berlin (movements 1, 2, and 3).

The letter presented on p. 163 [69-70] is found in Arthur Seidl, *The Modern Spirit in German Art Music* (*Moderner Geist in der deutschen Tonkunst*).

The letter to Oskar Eichberg referred to on p. 170 [73] is in my possession and was first published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of December 4, 1917.

The letter to Anna Mildenburg presented on pp. 217-19 [92] was published by the recipient in the *Neue Freie Presse* of April 23, 1916.

The sectional headings of the Finale, "Der Rufer in der Wüste" and "Der große Appell," belong to the designations that were later eliminated by Mahler and are absent in the scores.

THIRD SYMPHONY

Score completed Summer 1896, published 1898.

First performance of the second and third movements 1896 Berlin, of the whole work 1902 Krefeld, Music Festival (Tonkünstlerfest).

The sketch pages presented on pp. 249-51 [106] are in the possession of Mrs. Alma Maria Mahler.

The letters to Anna Mildenburg quoted on pp. 251 [107] ff. were published by the recipient in the *Neue Freie Presse* of April 23, 1916.

The titles of the individual movements given as the final version are presented after a notation of Mahler in my possession from January 1907 for the program book of a Berlin Philharmonic concert. The supplement reads: "The headings which the composer had originally given to the individual movements may serve as an orientation regarding the emotional and intellectual content to the listener who is not familiar with the work."

The quotations cited from conversations in this and further analyses are taken from the anonymously released "From a Diary Regarding Mahler" ("Aus einem Tagebuch über Mahler") in the Mahler issue of *Der Merker*. The letter to Richard Batka referred to in the discussion of the second movement is also found here.

FOURTH SYMPHONY

Score completed Summer 1900 in Maiernigg on the Wörther Sea, published 1901.

The sketch page presented on p. 336 [145] is in my possession. It is a music sheet in large quarto format and was apparently originally connected to the similar sketch page for the Third Symphony.

I am unable to provide an authentic source for the heading to the second movement, “Freund Hein spielt auf.” The program of the Berlin premiere, conducted by Mahler himself on December 16, 1901, designates the second movement only as “Scherzo,” yet at the time, the heading mentioned was already in circulation. Adler specifies the first performance as 1902 in Munich. The year is presumably incorrect, or otherwise the Berlin performance would have already taken place before the Munich one.

FIFTH SYMPHONY

Score completed 1902, published 1905. First performance 1904 in a concert of the Cologne Gürzenich Orchestra.

Regarding the indication of the first movement, “Wie ein Kondukt,” it should be noted that “Kondukt” is to be understood, in accordance with Austrian idiom, as a funeral procession. The same indication returns in the course of the first movement of the Ninth Symphony.

Of the *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Death of Children*), according to Adler’s statements, Nos. 1-3 originated in the year 1900-1901, and Nos. 4 and 5 in the year 1901-1902. Mahler’s oldest daughter was born in 1902 and died in 1907.

Adler places the time of composition for the other five Rückert songs in 1901-1902.

SIXTH SYMPHONY

Score completed 1904, published 1905. First performance in Essen (Music Festival [Tonkünstlerfest]).

This analysis is also based on the miniature score, and only in the reordering of the middle movements have I followed the later version. All other changes are related to details of instrumentation.

[359] In the large score, the third hammer blow is absent (miniature score, p. 260).² Because practical considerations were without a doubt alone decisive for this omission as for the other later changes, but the idea of the hammer blows was likewise without a doubt unusually significant for the conception, the first version Mahler chose to publish appeared to me especially important in this case. With respect to the execution and the effective representation in sound, the hammer blow remains a problem. Even Mahler only described the sound, but gave no directions for its execution. Thus far, in performances of the work I have been able to hear, the hammer blow has not acoustically come to fruition in accordance with the intention.

The full text of Mahler’s farewell letter to his Vienna artists from the year 1907, referred to on p. 478 [208], reads, according to Specht’s transmission of it:

“To the honored members of the Court Opera! The hour is come that has set a limit to our joint activities. I depart from the place of work that has become dear to me, and herewith bid farewell to you.

2 m. 783.

Instead of a whole completed work, as I had dreamed, I leave behind a partial one, incomplete, as is determined for mankind.

It is not for me to make a judgment about what my work has become for those to whom it was dedicated. Yet in such a moment I may say of myself that I had honest intentions and set my goal high. My efforts could not always be crowned with success. The resistance of matter and the malice of the object are handed to nobody as they are to the practicing artist. Yet I have always placed my whole being upon it, and subjected my person to the cause, placing duty above my inclinations. I have not spared myself, and could therefore be permitted to also demand the exertion of all forces from others.

In the throng of the battle, in the heat of the moment, both you and I were not saved from wounds or wrongs. But if a work was successful, or a problem solved, then we forgot all hardship and trouble, and we all felt richly rewarded—even without external signs of success. We have all made progress, and with us the institution that benefited from our efforts.

You who have promoted me in my difficult, often thankless task, who have helped me and battled with me, now have my warmest thanks. Take my sincere wishes for your further course in life and for the prosperity of the Court Opera Theater, whose fortunes I will also continue to follow with the keenest interest. Gustav Mahler.”

SEVENTH SYMPHONY

Score completed 1905, published 1908. First performance 1908 in Prague.

EIGHTH SYMPHONY

Score completed 1907, published 1910. First performance September 12, 1910 in Munich.

The sketch page referred to on p. 627 [273] is in the possession of Mrs. Alma Maria Mahler.

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

Score completed Summer 1908 in Altschluderbach near Toblach.

First performance November 1911 in Munich under Bruno Walter.

The draft score of the Tenth Symphony is in the possession of Mrs. Alma Maria Mahler. I have refrained from the reproduction of other inscriptions besides those mentioned on p. 715 [312], in light of their intimately personal character.

NINTH SYMPHONY

Score completed 1909, published 1912. First performance June 1912 in Vienna under Bruno Walter.

On the indication “Wie ein schwerer Kondukt” in the first movement (study score, p. 49),³ see the note to the Fifth Symphony.

Mahler died on May 18, 1911 in Vienna, shortly before the end of his 51st year.

3 m. 327.

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⁴ Bekker's bibliography is presented here in its original format, with English translations of the titles (except for “Biographie”) in brackets. Where Bekker does not provide a date, it is also given in brackets.

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